

**sub-regional consultation
of english/dutch-speaking
lutherans in the
caribbean area**



PARAMARIBO/SURINAM

JANUARY 3-5, 1977

**SUB-REGIONAL CONSULTATION
OF ENGLISH/DUTCH-SPEAKING
LUTHERANS IN THE
CARIBBEAN AREA**



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INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

It is a great pleasure for me to forward to the English and Dutch-speaking churches in the Caribbean Region as well as to representatives of other sister churches and interested persons the material of the SUB-REGIONAL CONSULTATION OF ENGLISH/DUTCH-SPEAKING LUTHERANS IN THE CARIBBEAN AREA, held in Paramaribo, Surinam, between January 3 and 5, 1977.

I hope that the lectures and reports presented at this consultation, as well as the resolutions accepted by it, will be carefully studied in the churches and that steps will be taken to implement some of the recommendations. At this point I can already inform the participants of the consultation that the Executive Committee of the Lutheran World Federation, at its meeting in Divonne, France, February 20 - 26, 1977, received a report on the consultation, discussed the resolutions - together with the recommendations from other areas - and made concrete plans for their implementation.

Until recently only very few people knew that the oldest Lutheran church in the so-called New World was founded in the Caribbean region. In fact, the existence itself of Lutheran churches in that area was largely unknown. It can also be said that the different Lutheran churches, which had been working parallel to one another - sometimes for decades or even centuries - knew very little about the ministry of their sister churches, and cooperation between them was almost non-existent.

The first encounter took place, at the request of some of the Lutheran churches in that area, in Georgetown, Guyana, January 1975. It was an historic occasion and resulted in the more concrete expression of the desire to hold similar meetings also in the future. At the same time the Lutheran World Federation was invited to assist the churches in the organization of such conferences.

Although the special purpose of the recent Surinam consultation was to prepare the churches for their participation in the LWF Sixth Assembly, it certainly also promoted Lutheran unity and cooperation in the Caribbean region, which hopefully will also show good results in the work of the churches represented there.

A word of thanks should be extended to the host church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Surinam, to which belongs the oldest Lutheran congregation in South America. The invitation of this church and its cordial hospitality, which also included many services to foreign participants, both before and after the consultation, was sincerely appreciated.

The present modest publication of the material of the Surinam Consultation will - hopefully - establish a communication link between the Lutheran churches in the Caribbean area and in other parts of the Christian world. By this means it conveys the following message: the Lutheran churches in that region

- in spite of their reduced membership - are also part of the Church Universal. They have special gifts to share with other churches, but are, in turn, in need of receiving the special gifts these other churches have to offer.

Thus the Surinam Consultation should not be considered as an event in itself, but as part of a process, or - in more biblical terms, a station on the way of pilgrimage - toward the goal of reaching the aim of the church: to become a manifestation of the love God showed us in Jesus Christ.

With these thoughts the Office of the Secretary for Latin America and the Caribbean Region of the Department of Church Cooperation of the Lutheran World Federation presents the material of the Surinam Consultation, with the hope that it will be an incentive for work in the future.

Geneva, May 1977

George Pösfay

SUB-REGIONAL CONSULTATION OF
ENGLISH/DUTCH-SPEAKING LUTHERANS IN THE CARIBBEAN AREA

Maarten Luther Church, Paramaribo, Surinam
January 3 to 5, 1977

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

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Austin, Rev. Charles M.	- English Editor, LWF	- LWF, Geneva, SWITZERLAND
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SUB-REGIONAL CONSULTATION OF ENGLISH/DUTCH-SPEAKING LUTHERANS IN THE CARIBBEAN

Paramaribo, Surinam, January 3 - 5, 1977

P R O G R A M

TIME	MONDAY, JAN. 3 *	TUESDAY, JAN. 4	WEDNESDAY, JAN. 5
9:00	Opening Session and Devotion (Lutheran Church in Surinam)	Devotion (Conference of Lutheran Churches in Venezuela)	Devotion (Lutheran Church in Guyana)
9:20	BIBLE STUDY ON SELECTED TEXTS FROM ROMANS (Leader: Rev. Samuel Seeram)		Lecture: " <u>In Christ: Responsible Care for Creation</u> " (II) (Mr. E. Bower, Surinam)
10:00	GROUP STUDY OF TOPICS RELATED TO BIBLE TEXT		
10:30	REPORTING AND CLOSING PRAYER		Discussion of lecture
10:45	BREAK - REFRESHMENTS		
11:15	Lecture: " <u>In Christ: Responsible Care for Creation</u> " (I) (Mr. James Masih-Das, Guyana)	Lecture: " <u>In Christ: Together in Mission</u> " (Dr. C.-J. Hellberg, LWF, Geneva)	Lecture: " <u>In Christ: One Community in the Holy Spirit</u> " (Prof. Tannassee, UTCWI, Jamaica)
11:45	PLENARY DISCUSSION		
12:30	LUNCH - NOON RECESS - RETURN TO HOMES		
16:30	AFTERNOON COFFEE OR TEA		
17:00	Informative session: The Work of the LWF and Plans for the VIth Assembly (Rev. Maasdorp, Dr. Hellberg, Rev. Pösfay)	Presentation of Lutheran and ecumenical joint programs in the Caribbean, and other reports	Recommendations of the Consultation and plans for future cooperation in the Caribbean
19:00	S U P P E R		
20:00	Briefing by the represented churches on their activities (Surinam, Bahamas, Trinidad, Guyana, Venezuela)	Continuation of presentations, Cultural evening	Closing Service with Communion. Theme: " <u>In Christ: A New Community</u> " (preacher: Dr. Swanson)
21:45	EVENING PRAYER		

* On view of the Opening Session all items on the Monday morning program will take place about 30 minutes later

ADDRESS DELIVERED AT THE OPENING DEVOTIONS ON JANUARY 3, 1977

by Rev. Gerard Solinger

We are here at this consultation to prepare for the Sixth Assembly of the Lutheran World Federation in Dar-es-Salaam. The theme of that Assembly will be "In Christ: A New Community".

I think the eye-catcher of this theme is the word "new". Yesterday I spoke to a pastor of the Reformed Church who was going to a conference in Trinidad on the renewal of the Church. As Lutherans we all know that a renewal of the Church was achieved by Luther. Luther lived in a time when the Church was rotten to the core. And not only in the Protestant church, but also in the Catholic church there was a renewal called the Counter-Reformation.

However, in the Bible itself we can read about the renewal of a religious community, which was brought about by King Hezekiah (2 Kings 18). It is curious that Hezekiah did not mind hurting the "false" religious feeling of the crowds. Of the sacred ark he said "You no longer have to carry it around on your shoulders". But the people loved to carry it on their shoulders when they were on a military mission.

Of the Jewish Easter (Passover) he said "It will not be held in the family, but all the people have to go to Jerusalem to fulfill their Easter Passover obligations." Especially the people in the northern part of Israel disliked going to Jerusalem. Besides, the crowds worshipped Nehushtan, the bronze serpent which Abatjar had brought to David as a treasure. It was very holy, and when people came to Jerusalem they thought Nehushtan had a miraculous power to heal sickness. Hezekiah, however, destroyed it.

Hezekiah was also the first king to forbid sacrifices on the hills. All these measures were certainly not democratic or popular. That became evident when Sennacherib destroyed and plundered the rural areas of Judah: the people condemned Hezekiah for they held him responsible for this. This was the punishment for his prohibiting sacrifices on the hills.

Both Luther and Hezekiah abolished a great many things, a great many religious institutions.

The renewal of a religious community must be radical, in the original meaning of the Latin word "radix", which means "root".

When we refer in this way to the theme of the LWF Sixth Assembly we overlook very important words, the words "in Christ". As you certainly know, the words "in Christ" are a standard expression of St. Paul's. He uses it very often. And we have to ask ourselves: what should come to our mind when we hear these words?

It seems to me that there are two ways, two possibilities to explain this expression. The first interpretation is the mystic one. One of the most famous men to explain it in a mystic way was Albert Schweitzer.

Being "in Christ" is a mystic situation. In mystics one can speak of a union with God as a personal experience. The Pauline expression of being "in Christ" was in this aspect influenced by the Hellenistic mysticism.

More and more, however, one comes to the conclusion that "being in Christ" is not a state of being "high". Being "in Christ" is the objective situation of the "ekklesia".

The New Creation is not accomplished by anybody, but is given in the death of Jesus Christ on Calvary.

I hope the difference is clear, for from a mystical point of view being "in Christ" is an achievement and there are different levels. One person can reach a higher level than the other.

From the other point of view, however, everything has been accomplished by Jesus Christ himself.

The result of what is accomplished by Christ is so new, that Paul speaks in terms of a New Creation. In the letter to the Colossians Paul states "You have put off the old nature with its practices and have put on the new nature, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator" (Col 3.9-10). Paul knew that renewal must be radical, so he went back to the one root of us all, Creation.

But again it is not we ourselves who have accomplished that new Creation, it is the second Adam, Jesus Christ:

"As one man's trespass issued in doom for all,
so one man's redress issued in acquital and life for us all;
Just as one man's disobedience made the rest sinners,
so one man's obedience will make all the rest righteous."

If once we can understand that what Christ has accomplished for us, namely that we his followers are renewed in the likeness of the Creator, then we ourselves will say with Paul "In this new creation there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free man, but Christ is all and in all." (Col 3.11).

OUTLINE OF THE BIBLE STUDIES

Monday, January 3, 1977. Leader: Samuel G. Seeram, President of the Lutheran Church in Guyana.

1. All people struggle for peace of mind and equality, but the peace that Christ brings is the best equipment for the struggle.
2. Jesus spoke well of women and had them very close to him.
Col. 3: "neither male nor female". Eph. 5: "Church as bride of Christ".
Women struggle for equality in many parts of the world. The Church's role is to point to what is biblical in this struggle and what is not. The Church must help men and women in developing to their fullest within the confines of what is male and what is female.
3. With salvation won, we are free to look at the world in a new way. Living with certainty, not with security.

Tuesday, January 4, 1977. Leader: Samuel G. Seeram

1. Christianity is indeed a religion - man's approach to God.
The entire Bible is an example of inter-religious dialogue.
Jonah, Paul on Mars Hill, speaking not in judgement, but to establish dialogue.
Jesus presenting himself to all persons, first to Jews, but to all.
How firm do we stand on the truth we know?
God's love in Christ is not a concept, but a truth.
2. What are the criteria for dialogue?
What is the purpose of dialogue? Understanding, conversion, social or political goals?
As Christians we can come to a dialogue simply as human beings (who are Christians).
No criteria for dialogue - criteria says that some things are dangerous.
But should Christians not have certain minimums for criteria?
3. There is fanaticism and spiritism in the Caribbean area.
God offers man a new life.
Varieties of ministry in Christian faith.
Laity is also called to minister.

THE WORK OF THE LWF AND PLANS FOR THE SIXTH ASSEMBLY

Information given by the Associate General Secretary of the LWF, Rev. Albertus Maasdorp, by the Director of the LWF Department of Church Cooperation, Dr. Carl-Johan Hellberg, and by the Secretary for Latin America of the same department, Rev. George Pösfay, on January 3, 1977

In his introductory remarks the Rev. Maasdorp greeted the participants of the consultation in the name of the General Secretary of the LWF, Dr. Carl H. Mau, and other staff members who had had previous contacts with the churches of the Caribbean area but were unable to be present at this meeting. He also expressed his personal feelings by thanking the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Surinam for its kind invitation and hospitality and announced that he would speak only briefly about the plans of the LWF for its Sixth Assembly, to be held in June of this year in Dar-es-Salaam.

The first question which is usually raised is: Why is the LWF preparing to hold its Assembly in Africa?

In the first place it can be said that in 1973 the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania (ELCT) invited the LWF and volunteered to host this meeting, a proposal which the Executive Committee accepted with great satisfaction. Not only because it came from the largest Lutheran member church on the African continent (the ELCT has more than 700.000 baptized members and is a fast-growing church), but also because by accepting this invitation the Federation wished to demonstrate that it really is a world-wide fellowship, in which the contribution of every member church - whether with a long or short history, with many or few members - is accepted and appreciated. Until now this has not been so evident if we look at the places where the five previous assemblies have been held: four of them in western Europe - Sweden, West Germany, Finland (the Lutheran population of these three countries represents the majority of the people!), and France - and one in the United States. With the 1977 Assembly we would like to emphasize that Lutheran churches all over the world are interested in the life and future of churches in countries not traditionally Lutheran or Christian, and especially in the ministry of the churches in Africa.

The second question refers to the preparation of the theme of the Sixth Assembly: What kind of work is the LWF doing to prepare for the Assembly?

Although the technical preparation of the Assembly is mainly the task of the host church and the Geneva staff of the LWF, the preparation of the theme (and the sub-themes, issue group topics etc.) is done by the member churches themselves. This work has been going on for more than one year and we were able to help the churches by sending them an Assembly Work Book, in which they could find ample material to study the theme "In Christ - A New Community" and other topics which will be discussed in Tanzania. On many occasions not only higher ecclesiastical bodies or special committees, but also individual congregations or congregational groups have been involved in this study. It should be mentioned that the different regional consultations, like the present one, also contribute to preparing the participants

to attend the Sixth Assembly.

The last question is: What will happen at the Assembly?

Of course it is not possible to answer this question, but we can say what we expect from the Assembly at this time. First of all, attention should be drawn to the fact that the Sixth Assembly will have a format different from that of the previous assemblies. During the first week there will be no official meetings, only Bible studies, discussion of issues, seminars and open hearings, informing the participants about the work which has taken place over the past seven years. This period will - hopefully - contribute to establishing a real fellowship among the delegates. They will have an opportunity of getting to know each other, exchange ideas, familiarize themselves with the working methods of such an international meeting, and also realize the possibility of their contribution to its success. Already during the first week, but certainly on Sunday, June 19, all participants will have a possibility to experience something of the life of the host church. Finally, during the second week, official business will be dealt with. Reports will be received, resolutions presented and voted on, and a new President and Executive Committee will be elected and entrusted to govern the LWF until the next Assembly. By giving the Sixth Assembly a somewhat unusual schedule it is hoped that all delegates and visitors will return to their home churches with the feeling that they have experienced at least something of this "New Community" in Dar-es-Salaam.

The Rev. George Pösfay informed the participants of the Consultation about the present structure of the LWF. He distributed two diagrams, which helped to illustrate where decisions are taken in the LWF and who is responsible for carrying them out. He explained that the Constitution of the LWF, which is a rather short, but very functional document, establishes the Assembly - at which all member churches have ample representation - as the supreme body of the organization. During its first years of existence the LWF held an assembly every five years. Since the Third Assembly these meetings have been held every seven years. The Assembly elects the President and the Executive Committee. The latter - under the chairmanship of the President - meets at least once every year between assemblies to take care of all matters constitutionally not assigned to the Assembly. The General Secretary is appointed by the Executive Committee and is responsible for carrying out all decisions of the Assembly and the Executive Committee. He is the head of the administration at headquarters and is assisted by the Associate General Secretary, the Finance and the Communication Offices.

Since the Executive Committee members are not paid for their services to the LWF, they cannot study every question in detail, but have to rely on the recommendations of experts. To receive such recommendations the Executive Committee appointed three Commissions to deal with questions related respectively to studies, mission and inter-church cooperation and to all aspects of Christian service. These Commissions are at present composed of nine members and also hold at least one meeting every year. Their working arms are the Departments, each one headed by a Director. The

internal structure of the individual departments reflects the tasks it is supposed to perform. The Department of Studies has four Study Areas to which it gives special attention, the Department of Church Cooperation has a more geographical structure and that of the Department of World Service reflects basically its three types of activities: emergency relief and rehabilitation assistance, refugee work and community development.

It should be observed that all these activities are carried out in the name of the member churches, with their cooperation and on their behalf and on that of the communities in which they live. Thus it can be said that the LWF does not want to be more than what its member churches would like to be or - defined from another point of view: it would like to be an instrument of the Lutheran churches to help them to carry out their mission more effectively, because it promotes unity among them, which in turn enables them to join forces and help each other to carry out tasks which would otherwise not be possible.

(The two diagrams on the following pages give ample information about the above mentioned distribution of responsibilities)

Dr. Carl-Johan Hellberg illustrated the work which is carried out by a Commission and Department of the LWF by giving details of the activities of the Commission and Department of Church Cooperation.

George Pösfay

THE STRUCTURE OF THE
LUTHERAN WORLD FEDERATION

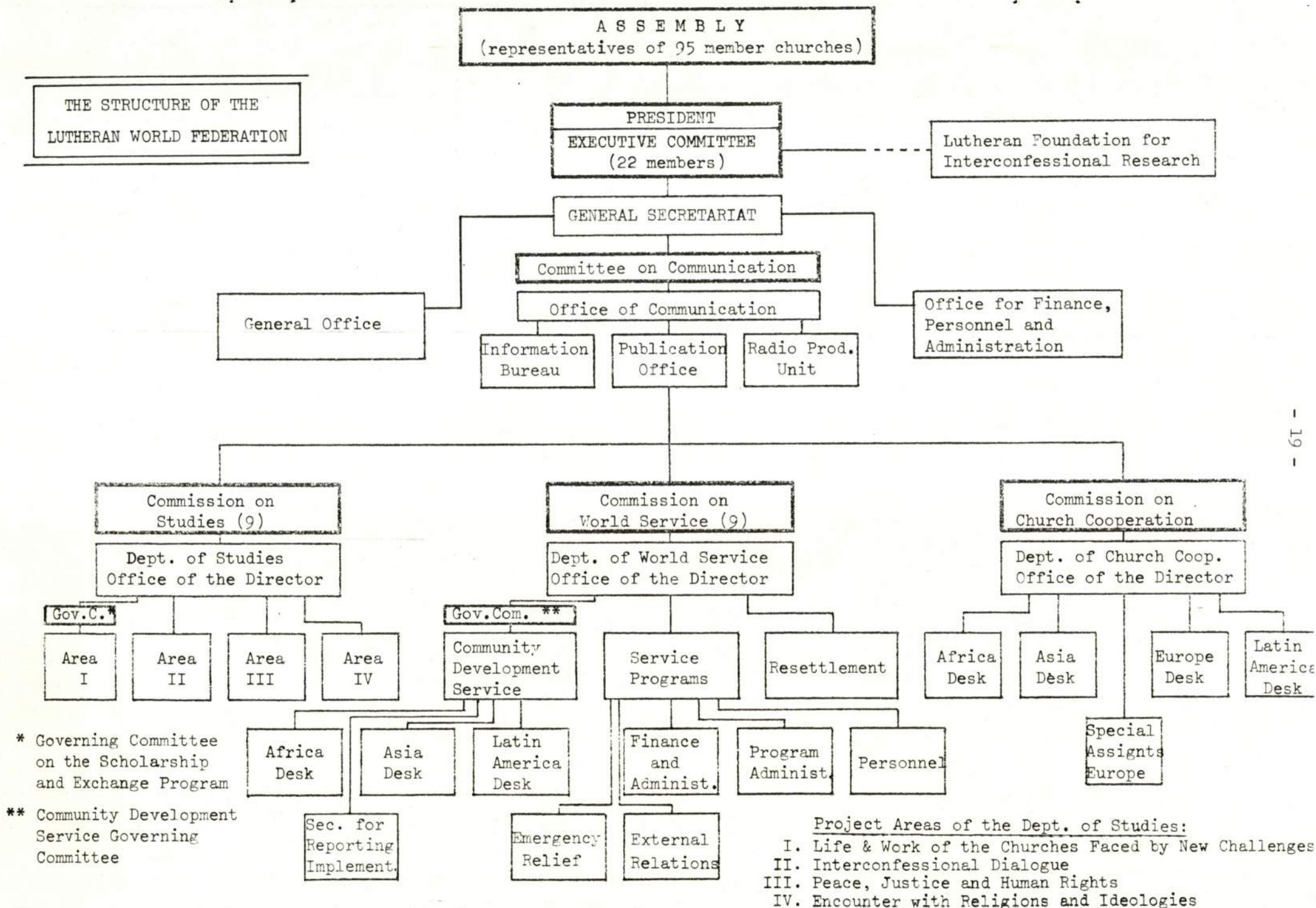
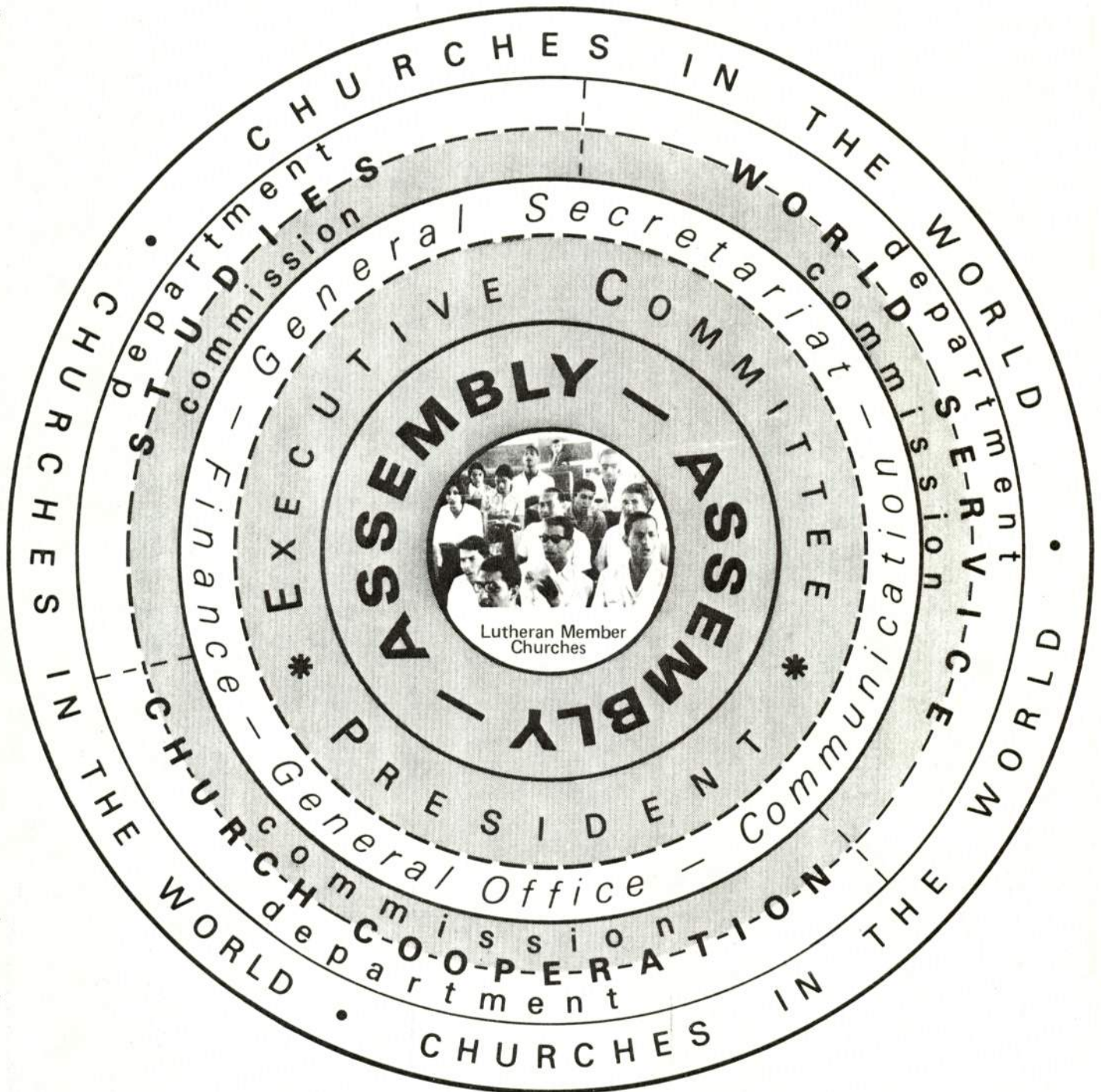


Diagram of LWF Structure



REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE CHURCH IN SURINAM

by the Rev. Gerard Solinger

Surinam is a typically Caribbean country due to its mixed population. There are two main groups, which are made up of negroes and hindus, immediately followed by Chinese, Indians and Indonesians.

Christians are not the largest group in the country, but until now the Christian faith has had a large influence on society (schools were built by the Moravians and the Catholics, and medical care in the jungle is in the hands of the church organizations).

Christians are in some way privileged. In the field of mass media Christians have much time at their disposal. Ministers receive part of their salary from the government. In fact this situation is rather dangerous. We have to ask ourselves: supposing that in future the government no longer pays the ministers, will the Lutheran church be able to support itself?

The economic situation in this country is influenced a great deal by the aid from Holland. When Surinam became independent, arrangements were made that it should receive 3,200 million guilders! Large investments are being made in the western part of Surinam, where they hope to mine bauxite in the Bakhuizen mountains. These investments are very large and a huge amount of the money coming from Holland will be spent there. The question is, will this indeed be for the benefit of all Surinamese? Will poverty be wiped out in the future? There is poverty in Surinam, especially among people who cannot work in the production sector. Here we encounter a Caribbean situation: women with a lot of children are left by their men. Another problem which needs attention is that of the old people. It is a fact that there is a lot of work to be done for the churches. However, it is not a matter of money alone, but also of personnel.

There are five congregations in Surinam, but four of them work in cooperation with the Reformed church. At the moment there are two ministers, of whom one is a Surinamese, the first Surinamese minister since 1740! These ministers are doing their best to keep up the work of the church. I myself have spent much time with youth work.

We collaborate with the Moravian church on a theological seminary. Once a month we have a twenty-minute Lutheran program on television and six times a week on radio.

REPORT ON LUTHERANS IN CUBA

by Dr. Carl Hellberg, LWF-DCC (after a visit there)

The Lutheran church was initiated by the LC/MS of USA after World War II. After the revolution, USA missionaries were withdrawn. The Lutheran church had never been incorporated in the country of Cuba and all the lands were held by the USA church. One missionary bargained with the new government and handed over church buildings. One faithful Cuban worker remained to work, mainly in Havana and Matanzas.

Eventually, all the church buildings were nationalized because the Lutheran work never obtained legal status; property was not registered legally in Cuba. The Cuban Lutheran worker refused to comply with the government regulations and was sent to the sugar cane fields for forced labor. Lutherans were isolated.

The Swedish ambassador was of help to the Cuban Lutherans. The LC/MS turned to the Swedish Church to take over the work. Dr. Hellberg was authorized by President J. Preus of the LC/MS to do anything necessary to continue. Dr. Hellberg came in May, 1974, and visited all the buildings. Two were used by the local government : one was a TV station to produce party programs. The church hall was used for social events. Dr. Hellberg negotiated with the Anglicans and Orthodox churches because they were helping Cuban Lutherans. It was decided that the pastoral care to the Lutherans would be given by Anglicans and the Lutheran work integrated into the Anglican church. The Bishop of the Anglican church believes in maintaining the Lutheran identity. Future possibilities include more relations with the Cuban Lutheran church and the Lutheran church in Guyana. Caribbean Lutherans should follow closely what can be done to help Cuban Lutherans.

REPORT ON THE LIFE AND ACTIVITIES OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH IN GUYANA

by the Rev. Samuel G. Seeram, President of the LCG

My dear friends, it is my privilege and pleasure to present to you some information on the life and activities of the Lutheran Church in Guyana. I will not be able to catalogue for you any details because of time, however, let me say that Guyana is an independent sovereign state situated on the north-eastern coast line of the sub-continent of South America with 83,000 square miles and a population of about 700,000. We are a multi-racial and a multi-religious society with a government aiming at socialistic ideals.

The Advent of Christianity

Lutherans were the first to plant the "Banner of the Cross" in our country, known then as the Country of Berbice. Lutheran laymen of Dutch origin, who were planters, started the church in the spacious mansion of Mr. Abbensetts, and some time later a call was sent to Holland for a pastor. The first pastor, in the person of the Rev. Johann Kendrick, was sent and his pastorate officially began in 1743. The church was named "Ebenezer". As time progressed there was a slave rebellion organized by a house slave called Cuffy. Later the church was placed on a raft, sailed down the Berbice River and established at New Amsterdam. Today it is under the pastorate of the Rev. W. Morris.

Multi-Racial Community

We are a multi-racial society: Europeans (Portuguese), Chinese (in the minority), while Indo-Guyanese are the largest in population, followed by Afro-Guyanese and the Amerindians, who are the indigenous people. We say with pride that our church has all the races of the land in its membership.

Multi-Religious Community

This land comprises the three major religions of the world: Hinduism, Christianity and Islam. Recently, in the minority also the Raj Yoga Centre (T.M.) and the Sri Satya Sai Baba Centre (The Motherhood and Fatherhood of God: 'Sai', mother, and 'Baba' like 'Aba', father). In Surinam we also have occultism and witchcraft, called 'Libba', 'Bukru' and 'Bukumanti'.

Activities of the Lutheran Church in Guyana

A. Nationally

- i. We are actively engaged in the programme of the Guyana Council of Churches, of which I am the first vice-chairman;
- ii. Spearheaded by the Guyana Council of Churches, an Inter-Religious Council was organized, which has a Lutheran Secretary, the Rev. Paul Tidemann;
- iii. We are also engaged in an agricultural programme under the directorship of the Rev. Paul Hansen.

B. Internationally

- i. a) The Lutheran Church in Guyana is affiliated to the Lutheran World Federation,
- b) We are also affiliated to the Caribbean Council of Churches, with Mr. James Masih-das as head of their Guyana Office;
- ii. "Genetically" speaking we are a sister church of the Lutheran Church in America. We work in cooperation with its Division for World Mission and Ecumenism.

The Lutheran Church in Guyana became an incorporate body by an act of Parliament in 1943, now we are a legal body. We have 52 congregations with a membership of 12,000. There are 12 national pastors, four missionaries (two of which are women) and one deacon.

The Evangelical Outreach

Apart from the conventional type of proclamation we are also engaged in a special outreach, called "Yisu Katha" (Story of Jesus), to our non-Christian communities. This is done in Sanskrit, Hindi, Urdu and English, and at times we use an apologetic attitude using Lukan, Johannine and Pauline approach.

Finally I appeal to you that we pray for each other, that in our togetherness men may come to acknowledge Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour.

REPORT ON LUTHERAN WORK IN THE BAHAMAS

by the Rev. William H. Jones, Lutheran Church of Nassau

The Lutheran Church in the Bahamas has now a rather solid foothold. Our congregation in Nassau, at first primarily made up of expatriate members, is steadily becoming more native. Over the past eight years the trend has gone from 85% expatriate (American, Canadian, European) to 85% Bahamian. Two factors have played into this: Foreigners are returning to their homelands, and the church is reaching more and more into the native population. The congregation in Freeport (ALC) has suffered because of the too rapid expulsion of the expatriate before the congregation was able to make the transition to the native-born. Then, too, there have been several long vacancies in the pastorate. This situation, we confidently hope, will soon be remedied.

There is a good relationship between the two congregations. The Nassau church has at various times transferred members to Freeport. The transfer of members from Freeport to Nassau seldom occurs, simply because the economy of Freeport is tied to the U.S. and not to the Bahamian mainstream.

The Nassau congregation has established two rather strong programs: One is a Mission Outreach and the other is a Social Outreach. During the year the congregation is in this way able to help hundreds of persons in their day-to-day needs and bring the Gospel of our Lord to thousands within our area.

Our Sunday School has an enrollment of 85, taught by 8 members of the staff. We also have a two-week Vacation Bible School each summer for our own and the children of the general community. Attendance here runs near the 100 mark. These activities are duplicated by the Freeport church.

REPORT ON THE VENEZUELA COMMUNICATION PROGRAM

Summary of a report given by the Rev. Douglas H. Groll (Caracas, Venezuela)

For many years the Spanish version of the "Lutheran Hour" has been broadcast by several Venezuelan radio stations. One of the LC-MS pastors working in Venezuela was appointed to take care of the correspondence and follow-up work of these radio programs. Later a production studio was organized, which has been housed for the last one and a half years in a Communication Center donated by the International Lutheran Laymen's League for that purpose. Now the programs are being produced mainly in Venezuela and also shipped from there to several Latin American countries, especially in the Andean Zone. They are now called "Christ for all the Nations" and are very popular both inside and outside Venezuela. Some attempts have

been made to prepare also TV spots, but the prohibitive cost of producing them and putting them on the air has slowed down this plan. The production of short films for movie theatres and audio-visual programs for congregational and missionary use seem to open a better perspective. The follow-up work is mainly done through the mailing of Bible study material, pamphlets and other printed matters and the answering of letters - it could still be extended and made more meaningful.

REPORT ON LUTHERAN WORK IN VENEZUELA

by the Rev. Douglas Groll, Conference of Lutheran Churches in Venezuela

Lutheran work began in the 1530's, with a Welsh community. In 1895 a European group called a Lutheran pastor and continued for fifty years. After World War II, in 1951, a German refugee and owner of a sugar cane plantation, evangelized the German population. The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod sent missionaries to work with the Latins. In 1952 the LWF helped European refugee groups. 3,000 Lutherans, out of a population of 12,500,000, live in Venezuela today, most of them Europeans. There is a rush to industrialization, and the oil industry is widely developed. Lutherans have tried to balance social and congregational development in their Spanish work. They have three educational projects: a high-school with 500 students, "barrio" projects on behalf of the poor through adult education and pre-school education, mass media programs in Spanish.

370 Lutherans are devoting themselves to the Spanish work.

The English-speaking work has two objectives: to serve the people pastorally, to educate them to use their power for the good of the development of Venezuela.

REPORT ON LUTHERAN WORK IN TRINIDAD

by the Rev. William K. Harman, LCA/DWME

Lutheran work began in Trinidad after a long discussion with the Lutheran Church in Guyana in 1966. A small Lutheran community emerged. In 1970 the emphasis of the work was shifted to be an ecumenically Lutheran presence on the island, making available the resources of the Lutheran church to existing Christian communities. In 1971 a Lutheran pastor was invited to serve an ecumenical church, the United Church of Diego Martin, founded by Methodist, Moravian and Presbyterian churches, in a growing suburb of the capital, Port of Spain. A Lutheran pastor continues to serve this group while working half time as representative of the LCA/DWME to the Lutheran Church in Guyana and engaging the Lutheran church in ecumenical projects through the Caribbean Conference of Churches and other groups. About 50 people are members of the United Church.

REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE GUYANA EXTENSION SEMINARY

Prepared by Paul A. Tidemann, Georgetown, Guyana.

Read by Rev. Samuel G. Seeram, at the Consultation of English-speaking Lutherans, in Paramaribo, Surinam, on January 5, 1977.

Relationship and purpose

The Guyana Extension Seminary is a special division of the Guyana Council of Churches endorsed by the member churches of the Council. As such, the Guyana Extension Seminary is an entity in itself, but is responsible to the Council for regular reporting to the Executive Committee and for an annual report to the annual meeting of the Council. The Guyana Extension Seminary is to be seen as an integral arm of the work of the Guyana Council of Churches.

The purpose of the Guyana Extension Seminary is to train lay persons for various forms of leadership in the church in Guyana. It is seen as a means of bringing all the possible call and Caribbean regional resources to bear on the need for local congregations to have adequately trained leadership so that they can carry on a more vibrant and effective mission and ministry to Guyanese society. The Guyana Extension Seminary is not seen, at this point, as supplanting the need for full-time residential seminary training for those who will be full-time salaried personnel. As the need arises, discussion may be held to enable a combination of extension and residential training through the various theological seminaries in the Caribbean.

Objectives

The following objectives will guide the work of the Guyana Extension Seminary :

1. To train lay persons to be effective leaders in congregations of the Christian churches which are without resident, full-time pastoral leaders. Such lay persons will be used in leadership as the denominations individually decide.
2. To train lay persons to fulfill specific types of leadership in any congregation such as teacher, counsellor, worship leader, administrator, community organiser.
3. To train lay persons to supplement the full-time ministry in a local congregation in order to free the pastor for supervisory activities among a cluster of congregations.

4. To provide the training resource for all denominations that can be drawn upon for the basic training of persons for any aspect of ministry desired by the denomination.
5. To make courses available to individual lay persons for personal enrichment in Christian faith or the development of specific skills.
6. To be a touchstone for all clergy in Guyana where clergy can come for in-service training and enrichment.
7. To conduct practical research into new forms of ministry to various aspects of the developing Guyanese society such as National Service, hinterland development programmes, agricultural development schemes and to train persons to minister to these non-traditional gatherings of people.
8. To be an influence in enabling the church to assume the forms and styles that it needs in order to communicate the Gospel in this Guyanese/Caribbean society.
9. To be a leaven within the entire church, ecumenically, to enable a more common understanding and direction of the particular mission that the Christian church has to Guyanese society.
10. To maintain relationships through the Guyana Council of Churches with the various theological seminaries in the Caribbean and with the Agency for Church Renewal (ARC) of the Caribbean Conference of Churches in order to both provide data from our experience and to receive guidance and resource assistance.

Curriculum and teaching terms

A curriculum of 15 basic courses has been outlined (see attached page). This scheme has been constructed with a particular concern to relate the subject matter to the particular scene of ministry and mission in Guyana. Thus, the courses intentionally have 'non-traditional' titles in order to indicate a particular context for teaching.

It is expected that the teaching term will last about 10 weeks each quarter, leaving about three weeks for evaluation and planning. Courses will be taught on a weekly or monthly basis, depending on the course and the area of the country being served. In addition, special 'institutes' will be planned lasting from ten days to two weeks, meeting every day or evening. Such institutes will fulfill two basic purposes :

- 1) Covering the material of one of the 'courses' in the curriculum; such an institute might pre-suppose some self-study preparation prior to the institute.
- 2) Meeting to deal with a very particular aspect of mission or ministry in depth such as alcoholism, Caribbean family life, education for development, evangelism in a pluralistic society, etc.

General Board

The General Board is authorised by the Guyana Council of Churches and consists of one representative nominated by each member body of the Council. The General Board of the Guyana Extension Seminary will meet at least quarterly and will elect its own officers. It is authorised to operate a bank account entitled "The Guyana Extension Seminary of the Guyana Council of Churches".

Executive Committee

The Executive Committee of the Guyana Extension Seminary shall consist of eight persons in all, including all elected officers of the General Board, the General Director and other persons selected by the General Board. The Executive Committee shall meet at least bi-monthly and shall be concerned largely with administrative and fiscal management of the Guyana Extension Seminary.

Programme Committee

The Programme Committee of the Guyana Extension Seminary shall consist of persons selected by the General Board and shall include the General Director and as many as possible of the Guyana Regional Directors. The Programme Committee shall meet at least monthly and shall have responsibility for the following :

- 1) General curriculum development and evaluation
- 2) Development of course syllabi
- 3) Planning for establishment of regional centres
- 4) General oversight of the programmes of the regional centres through the Directorate
- 5) Establishment of course teaching schedule
- 6) Planning for in-service training schemes for clergy
- 7) Planning training for local faculty
- 8) Conducting research into new forms of ministry needed and future planning for necessary training schemes
- 9) Long and short-range programme planning

Directorate

There shall be a full-time General Director of the Guyana Extension Seminary by 1977 and until that time the General Director will be part-time. As soon as possible, the General Director should be a Guyanese citizen, clergy or lay person. The General Director shall be a salaried staff member and shall receive adequate compensation and travel expenses. The General Director shall be responsible for the general administration and promotion of the Guyana Extension Seminary and shall sit with voice, but not vote, on the General Board and with voice and vote on all special committees established by the General Board.

Each regional centre of the Guyana Extension Seminary shall have a Regional Director who shall be a non-salaried clergy or lay person. Any expenses incurred by this person in performance of centre responsibilities shall be borne by the operating budget. The Regional Director shall have responsibility for the physical well-being of the programmes at that centre, the care of any properties and equipment, libraries and supplies and the general administration of courses and activities of that centre. The Regional Directors may attend the meetings of the General Board with voice, but not vote.

Teaching staff

1) Local personnel

Ongoing weekly or monthly courses of the Guyana Extension Seminary shall primarily be taught by local clergy or lay persons. These persons shall be selected by the General Board upon recommendation of the General Director and the Programme Committee. Such faculty persons shall possess the necessary qualifications and/or experience for teaching the assigned subject matter. Such local faculty shall be non-salaried, but any travel expenses incurred by such persons shall be borne by the Operating budget.

2) Caribbean Regional Personnel

In order to provide objective and skilled input from the Caribbean region in the training of lay persons in Guyana, it is planned that persons from the region will be invited to conduct special 'institutes' and courses with a specified duration spanning one or two weeks, intensively conducted. Such persons may be invited through two primary resource centres :

- a) United Theological College of the West Indies, Kingston, Jamaica, where a Director of Extension Studies will provide curriculum assistance, aid in faculty training and coordination of arrangements for teaching staff from any of the denominational or ecumenical seminaries in the Caribbean. Such staff persons will be non-salaried but will receive all travel and lodging expenses.
- b) Agency for Church Renewal (ARC) of the Caribbean Conference of Churches will be drawn upon as a resource and guide in curriculum development and training methods and will be requested to provide special teaching staff. Such staff persons will be non-salaried but will receive all travel and lodging expenses.

Evaluation

At the end of the first year of operation of The Guyana Extension Seminary, no later than June 30, 1977, an evaluation of the programme shall have been carried out, enlisting the opinions and suggestions of all member churches of the Guyana Council of Churches. Such suggestions and evaluations shall be pulled together into a written evaluation by the Programme Committee and presented to the General Board for action. The completed evaluation shall be sent in writing to all member churches of the Guyana Council of Churches and its Executive Committee.

Regional centres

Regional centres will be developed with both coastland and interior considerations. Interior centres will be developed with particular liaison and direction from any denominations working in an interior region. A suggested plan for regional centre development is as follows :

<u>Year</u>	<u>1976</u>	<u>1977</u>	<u>1978</u>	<u>1979</u>	<u>1980</u>
<u>Coastal</u>	5	+2	+2	+1	10 total in operation
<u>Interior</u>	-	1	+1	+2	4 total in operation

In 1976, there will be at least five centres operating at the following locations : Linden, Georgetown, New Amsterdam, Skeldon and Berbice River. In addition to this, plans are being made to experiment with either mobile centres or else a student transportation scheme in order to enable East Coast Demerara and West Coast Berbice students to participate. Full operations will not be possible for these areas this year, but some experimentation will be done centering around Victoria, E.C.D. and Armadale, W.C.B.

Course development

A suggested development of course offerings is suggested for the coastal centres for the present, with interior centres having to take special circumstances into consideration before a course-scheme can be finally determined :

<u>Year</u>	<u>1976</u>	<u>1977</u>	<u>1978</u>	<u>1979</u>	<u>1980</u>
Local new courses	3 ea ctr	6 ea ctr	4 ea ctr	2 ea ctr	-
Local repeat courses	-	-	4 ea ctr	6 ea ctr	5 ea ctr
Institutes	1 f/ 2 ctrs	2 f/ 3 ctrs	2 f/ 3 ctrs 1 f/ 2 ctrs	2 f/ 6 ctrs	3 f/ 6 ctrs
Experimental courses	-	1	1 ea ctr	2 ea ctr	2 ea ctr
In-service spec'l courses	-	1 f/ 2 ctrs	2 f/ 4 ctrs	2 f/ 6 ctrs	2 f/ 6 ctrs
Local course participants	20 ea ctr	35 f/ 5 ctrs 20 f/ 2 ctrs	50 f/ 7 ctrs 20 f/ 2 ctrs	50 f/ 9 ctrs 20 f/ 1 ctr	50 ea ctr

(NOTE: ea = each, ctr = centre, f/ = for)

Operating Budget Projection (Guyana local expenses only)

<u>Year</u>	<u>1976</u>	<u>1977</u>	<u>1978</u>	<u>1979</u>	<u>1980</u>
<u>EXPENSES</u>					
1. Director's salary	4,800	5,100	5,400	5,750	6,100
2. Secretary	1,300	1,700	2,000	3,600	4,000 +
3. Office supplies	1,500	1,750	2,000	2,500	3,000
4. Local Faculty travel	1,500	1,500	1,750	2,150	2,500
5. Interpretation	500	500	1,000	1,000	1,000
6. Office equipment/maint.	2,000	1,750	2,000	2,000	2,000
7. Regional libraries	1,500	1,500	1,500	2,000	2,500
Totals	US\$ 13,800	13,800	15,650	19,000	21,100

RECEIPTS

1. Guyana Council churches	6,930	6,930	9,580	12,500	14,600
2. Student fees	2,070	2,070	2,070	3,500	4,500
3. Extra-national sources	4,800	4,800	4,000	3,000	2,000++
Totals	US\$ 13,800	13,800	15,650	19,000	21,100

+ By 1979, at latest, secretary must be full time

++ Extra-national subsidies cease after 1980.

Guyana Council of Churches portion of the budget

As presently projected, the member churches of the Guyana Council of Churches will need to provide 50 % of the local operating budget of the Guyana Extension Seminary for the first two years of operation. The following assessment scheme is suggested and, by and large, accepted by the churches to date. The scheme is based on what is presently assumed to be the degree of initial participation by each church in the Guyana Extension Seminary and also somewhat considers the size of the church.

1. Lutheran	US\$ 2,000 (28.9 %)	8. Salvation Army	US\$ 275 (4.0 %)
2. Roman Catholic	1,000 (14.4 %)	9. Moravian	265 (3.8 %)
3. Methodist	750 (10.8 %)	10. Presbytery of Guyana	200 (2.9 %)
4. Anglican	600 (8.6 %)	11. Church of God	200 (2.9 %)
5. Congregational Union	500 (7.2 %)	12. Guyana Presbyterian	200 (2.9 %)
6. A.M.E.	340 (4.9 %)	13. Guy. Miss. Baptist	200 (2.9 %)
7. A.M.E. Zion	300 (4.3 %)	14. Nazarene	100 (1.5 %)

Students

Persons are encouraged to take courses in the Guyana Extension Seminary who are active Christians in their local congregations, who are 18 years old or more, who have ability to perform work equivalent to the levels between Standard 5 and Form 3, and who have consulted with their denomination and received their church's recommendation for study.

Church bodies are urged to determine the types of lay leadership needed, to seek qualified persons to receive training and recommend them for work in the Guyana Extension Seminary. The Church is encouraged to enter into some form of agreement with the prospective student so that the church's expectations are understood by the student and so that the student's understanding of his future role is clear.

Consideration will be given directly by the Guyana Extension Seminary for any person wishing to attend a course or series of courses for personal enrichment (see Objective # 5). The primary emphasis of this training programme is on persons who will fulfill certain roles in church life, therefore others will be considered on the basis of the particular course and the needs of students recommended by their churches.

The beginning

Plans are being made to begin courses in the Guyana Extension Seminary no later than September 1, 1976 and possibly before if the course syllabus and recruitment activities are completed. Courses will be taught simultaneously in all centres. The General Director is available to any denomination, congregation, ministers' fraternal or other grouping of persons to explain and interpret this important new work of the Guyana Council of Churches. Heads of churches and/or those who are responsible for lay training are asked to consider ways in which a wide-spread interpretation of this programme can be effected.

The office of the Guyana Extension Seminary is located on the compound of Redeemer Lutheran Church, Campbellville. Information can be obtained by writing or calling :

The Guyana Extension Seminary
The Rev. Paul A. Tidemann, General Director
208 Sheriff Street, Campbellville
Georgetown, Guyana S.A.

Telephone : 02-64582

THE GUYANA EXTENSION SEMINARY CURRICULUM

Training for Lay Ministry in Changing Guyana

This curriculum is designed to enable lay persons to function as effective church leaders. Honest academic pursuit is combined with high practicality in every course. The curriculum is catalytic - not exhaustive in the study of a subject, but giving the student the foundation and methods for personal study and ministry.

I. DIVISION OF BIBLICAL MISSION : THE FOUNDATION

- BM I - SETTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT : the record of the acts of God; methods of seeing through the Bible to God's activity today.
- BM II - ADDRESS TO SOCIETY : the prophetic role yesterday and examination of its function and its forms today.
- BM III - A MODEL OF GOD'S INTENT : the methods of the Christ - the Gospels; digging out an expression of Gospel for today's church and society.
- BM IV - FORMING A DIRECTION FOR MISSION : guidance for the church in Theology and practice; interpreting New Testament letters to Guyanese society.

II. DIVISION OF HISTORICAL MISSION : THE CONTINUITY

- HM I - PATTERNS OF WITNESS AND MISSION : a study of Acts of the Apostles with practical application and planning for the Guyanese church.
- HM II - GREAT THEMES IN CHURCH HISTORY : clarifying the Word for God's people; refining the Mission to society; setbacks, perversions and renewal; creating a practical vision of the Guyanese church in 2001 and how we will get there using historical perspective.
- HM III - THE GOSPEL IN BONDAGE - THE CARIBBEAN CHURCH : signal scenes since Columbus and the evolution of a relevant Christian expression.
- HM IV - OUR THEOLOGICAL HERITAGE - EAST, WEST AND CARIBBEAN : God, Christ, Holy Spirit, Church - naming the liberating Word.
- HM V - GRAPPLING WITH THE MYSTERIES IN HUMAN RESPONSE : a view of the essence of our brother's religious expressions.
- HM VI - MORALITY - OLD AND NEW : freedom and obedience for the Christian man; a practical appraisal of ethical issues facing Caribbean/Guyanese people today.

III. DIVISION OF CARING MISSION : THE PRESENCE

- CM I - THE CONTEMPORARY WITNESS : preacher/prophet -
the issues and forms of proclamation to church and
society.
- CM II - REHEARSING THE WORD : worship in Caribbean thought,
word, music and action; the role of worship leader
in the emerging church.
- CM III - HUMAN CARE : enabling personal/group re-entry into
responsible living - a method; an orientation to
basic Caribbean family/individual needs; an experience
with actual situations.
- CM IV - TRANSFORMATION TEACHING : methods of bringing forth new
life from the Christian experience; transformation
methods rather than education.
- CM V - PLANNING MISSION WITHIN CULTURE : analysis of the
cultures of the Caribbean and the unique demands
upon the church's mission; practical methods of
planning mission in a local community situation.

IN CHRIST - A NEW COMMUNITY

Lecture delivered by James N. Masih-Das, Representative of the Caribbean Conference of Churches in Guyana, on January 3, 1977.

Brothers and Sisters in our Lord Jesus Christ !

1. Introductory remarks

My first word must be greetings !

I bring you greetings on behalf of Dr. Roy Neehall, General Secretary of the Caribbean Conference of Churches (CCC) and my own greetings as Sub-Regional Coordinator for the three Guianas of the CCC.

We must all be aware that the motto (it is more than a theme) for our consideration at this Consultation is one that has been chosen for the VIth Assembly of the LWF to be held in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, in June this year - "In Christ - A New Community". We must also be aware that the objective of the LWF in convening a Consultation such as this has as its aim, the purpose of an indepth study of that motto under three topics. It is my pleasant task to explore the topic : "In Christ - Responsible Care for the Creation" and in keeping with the aim of the LWF, to relate that topic to the area or region in which a Consultation is held, in this case the Guyana area, within the Caribbean region. In other words, while the motto subsumed under three topics will be the subject of exhaustive study in Africa in six months time, our purpose here, for this lecture, will be to look at the topic assigned to me in the context of the Caribbean scene.

I want to take this early opportunity of expressing thanks for a rearrangement in the programme which permits my more active participation in my being permitted to address you today rather than on Wednesday as was originally planned. It is my deep regret that I cannot be present at your session on Wednesday since an important Planning Meeting of the CCC has already been fixed for that same day, Wednesday, in Trinidad at which it is imperative for me to be present. That Planning Meeting would be in preparation for the Consortium at a later date with the funding agencies of the CCC which, of course, is concerned with the whole structure, programmes and plans of the CCC for the triennium 1978 to 1980. Simply then, I must be present at that Planning Meeting, which would in fact, be the first opportunity I would have, officially, in being involved in the affairs of the CCC since my assumption of duty as SRC only 48 hours ago. Indeed, my appearance at this forum, a Lutheran forum, is my first

official act in the CCC which I consider more than significant being myself a Lutheran by birth, up-bringing and Christian growth and nurture within the fellowship of Christ Jesus our Lord.

Coupled with my expression of thanks for the re-arrangement in the programme which permits my more active participation in the Consultation, must also be an expression of thanks to Dr. Hellberg who, I understand, will address the Consultation on Wednesday at this hour, instead of at this time. I trust that this switch in plans will not in any way detract from his presentation but rather as I suspect would happen that you will be better prepared for a more weighty lecture at that time than I can ever hope to deliver to this august assembly.

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Turning now to the topic for our consideration, I wish to submit two premises which, I believe, you will accept as unchallengeable and undeniably fundamental to this discussion.

Firstly, that the act of Creation as recorded in the Book of Genesis is an act which addresses itself to both creature and creation, that is, the creative act of God embraces both Man, the creature and Nature, the creation.

Secondly, any separation or distinction of either the 'creature' or the 'creation' is made purely because of the emphasis which one would wish to make for a particular purpose, but in this discussion, I propose to make no such dichotomy but rather to include in the 'creation' the whole creative act of God as embracing the creature and the creation.

In the Christian's approach to society, as in every aspect of Christian life, the place to begin is with the ghastly death and miraculous resurrection of Jesus. That is to say, the scope of Christian life in this world, whether approached from a personal or a corporate perspective, centres on a faithful encounter with the fullness of the Gospel. The heart of Jesus' teaching is the Kingdom, the overthrowing of the values of the age, the aeon, and the establishment of the new aeon - the reign of God. From the viewpoint of the New Testament church, the resurrection of Jesus from the dead became the sign of the coming of that Kingdom. Both the teaching of Jesus and the young church's teaching about him established the framework for our understanding of time, of History, and of the human destiny in the purposes of God.

In 1 Thessalonians, Paul outlined the belief that the resurrected Jesus would, at the voice of the archangel and the trumpet of God, which herald the end of all things, descend in a cloud and there meet the saints, both those still living and those who will have been raised from the dead. It is a vivid picture of the end of time.

In a few short years, the New Testament church would have to adapt this teaching. The recognition that a literal end would not come quickly did not shatter belief in the significance of the resurrection. On the contrary, it sharpened the tension between belief in the age which was to come - the eschatological end of all things - and the new age which has already been inaugurated for believers in the resurrection. Christians came to see themselves as witnesses to a new age which is breaking through the old age that is dying. The Church is not only the community of those who live in the hope of a new age, but the community enabled by the resurrection of Jesus to appropriate the new age in the midst of History. The power of death - physical death and the death of the spirit - has been crushed. By the power of Christ, the first born of the new aeon, believers can live in the new aeon, even though its consummation awaits the end of time.

It is important to understand this point as it bears on our attitude toward History. The resurrection is a key to the Christian understanding of History. For the believer, secure in his faith, in a risen Lord, time and events between the coming of Christ and his Second Coming in glory are not meaningless flux. Rather they are the arena within which the signs of the new age are constantly breaking in. Just as Jesus' life and teaching are the model or paradigm of the new age and the resurrection its seal, every moment in History which partakes of the new age - that is, of the overthrowing of death and the power of death - is an eschatological event which ends the old world and inaugurates a new one. As Nicholas Berdyaev has written, "If you feed the hungry or free the oppressed, you are committing an eschatological deed and you are 'ending' this world so full of hunger and oppression. Every truly creative act is a historical fulfillment, a coming of the End, a transcending and transforming of this spellbound stricken world of ours".

The Church lives under a discipline to be a body of witnesses testifying to the presence of the end of the world in the midst of the world, a sign that the powers of death have been overcome. The church is not a body of moralists offering advice to a self-sufficient world.

There is a danger, of course, in an ethic rooted in judgement from the end of time. History has been replete with millenarian groups that turn their backs on the social order in favor of personal piety and salvation outside the historical process. Who of us is not tempted to say, with Paul: "Which of them am I to choose? I cannot tell. I am torn two ways: what I should like is to depart and be with Christ: that is better by far; but for your sake there is greater need for me to stay on in the body" (Phil. 1:23-24). We would undoubtedly stop short of longing for the early death about which Paul speaks, but we share the same temptation, to retreat from the world into a churchly style of life which equates Jesus' presence with the Church and not the world, and which unwittingly denies God's sovereignty over the whole world of which he is creator and Lord.

Our task as Christians in the world is to discern the signs of the Lord's coming, to preach the resurrection from the dead as the radical impingement on History and the end of History, the emergence in this age of the new age. Every act which overcomes the oppression of death in human lives is a sign of the end, a testimony of the unfolding purpose of History in the mind of God. Our calling as Christians is to bear witness to this reality, both by seeking to discern the print of God's lifegiving action in the world, and by action in the world which proceeds out of our loving response to him.

Against that background, let me offer four observations on the character of Christian involvement in the life of the world, dimensions of the Christian ethic which are deeply rooted in our understanding of the death and resurrection of Jesus.

First, the Christian ethic is eucharistic; it says 'thanks' : Christian behaviour is rooted in an appeal not to a sense of our oppression by the power of sin and guilt, but to the overcoming of them.

Freedom to act for those who are the victims of unjust structures and those who are part of them is not to be found in denying the oppressive power of the structures, but through faith in the Lord who frees us from their claim on our lives. In a social context, this is the meaning of justification by faith. Just as the liturgy focuses and presents anew the passion and resurrection of Jesus and, through reincorporation in the baptismal community, makes effective for the believer the living presence of Jesus, so is declaration of the Gospel to those who are caught in oppressive structures a signifying of their liberation from their powerlessness.

Second, the Christian ethic is communal. Salvation history before the coming of the Messiah was through Israel, a community both religious and national. In terms of the Old Covenant, Yahweh Sabaoth used the instrument of a holy people, Israel, to convey his purposes to the nations. Israel is to be seen not just as a collectivity of men and women called to individually righteous lives, but as a model of collective obedience to the will of God. As the new Israel, the Church of the New Testament understood itself in the same framework, as sharing in a communal vocation, to be a sign, a paradigm of the new age.

The Book of the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles in the New Testament make abundantly clear that contemporary Church politics has no corner on venality, corruption and partisan spirit; yet the power of Scripture is that it portrays a community for which, that is to say, the spirit dwells. One of the distortions of the contemporary charismatic movement in many instances is the narrowness of its catalogue of the spiritual gifts (primarily healing, tongues and the discerning of tongues) and not the panoply of gifts (teaching, administration, preaching, service - in short, the range of ministries) and its presentation of these in individualistic terms, rather than as signs of the Spirit's presence in a community.

It is not without accident, I think, that some of the most creative social thought emerging today in the Church is coming out of the conservative-evangelical tradition.

The Church is a community - a political community - and the manner in which it conducts its own political life has direct bearing on its faithfulness in being a witness to the new age.

Third, the Christian ethic is revolutionary. I use the word not solely in its workaday sense of the transfer of power from one group to another in society, with the consequent restructuring of social order that accompanies the transfer, but also in the sense intended by those who talk today about the raising of consciousness : the creation of a new human type and the restructuring of relationships and self-awareness which marks the new reality.

Let me call to mind the central ethical statement in Paul's letter to the Church in Rome, Chapter 12 and in particular the first two verses of the chapter.

Therefore (because, that is, of what God has done in History and in particular in Christ Jesus), I implore you, by that very mercy, to offer yourselves to him, a living sacrifice, dedicated and fit for his acceptance, the worship offered by mind and heart. Adapt yourselves no longer to the pattern of this present world, but let your minds be made over and your whole nature transformed.

The Greek text of this verse is instructive. Paul begins by asserting that "the old order" will be done away. But affirmation is not followed by a parallel phrase about a new age. Instead a command "be transformed", "the making again", "of your mind". The newness is a process centred in a command - a process made possible by the prior action of God. The grounds of the revolution are a revolutionary person in a transformed and transforming community.

Language of this sort may have seemed bizarre a few years ago. Three emergent theological movements - black theology, feminist theology and liberation theology from the Third World - challenge traditional ways of doing theology on the grounds that Christian consciousness as it has been given shape in the modern world is burdened with western, liberal, male and white perceptions of reality. There is no guarantee that these challenges to theology will ensure a more truly catholic theology or one that is less culturally encapsulated. The corrective is to be found in the New Testament experience; what emerged in the first century world was a profoundly revolutionary community, rooted in new understanding of History and of human purpose. And the new person was the most truly revolutionary aspect of the movement. It is not demythologised, secularised Christianity that human transformation takes place, but in our submission to the discipline of Scripture, where we may hope, "To encounter an alien speech which is finally the self-disclosure of God". The Christian ethic is eucharistic, communal and revolutionary.

And finally, the Christian ethic is one whose focus is on solidarity with the poor and the outcast. In the early, yeasty days of the New Testament church - long before the flirtation with power which was consummated in a concordat with Constantine - the Christian community was drawn from the lowest ranks of society.

"My brothers (Paul writes) think that sort of people you are, whom God has called. Few of you are men of wisdom, by any human standard; few are powerful or highly born. Yet, to shame the wise, God has chosen what the world counts folly and to shame what is strong, God has chosen what the world counts weakness. He has chosen things low and contemptible, mere nothings, to overthrow the existing order (1 Cor. 1:22-28).

If the lowly were chosen, both in the teaching and the practice of the new community, then the hope of the new age lay with the poor and oppressed, because their liberation is a sign that the powers of death which enslave sinners and outcasts have been overthrown. One of the unique facts about the Christian religion is its teaching that the work of God was completed, not simply in the life of a man, but in the life of a particular man, Jesus, who was clearly guilty as a blasphemer of the Jewish law.

The New Testament Church could not escape the suspicion that it was a subversive movement, and its appeal was clearly to the socially restive poor. Its teaching was biased in favor of the poor. One is hard-pressed to find a good word about the rich, either in Jesus' sayings or elsewhere in the New Testament literature. As Berdyaev put it, "Only Christians who have lost their conscience are capable of defending the rich against the poor."

Yet this bias toward the poor should not be romanticised. The poor do not exist as a problem to be solved or to provoke the guilt of the rich or to provide a rationale for Great Society, welfare-state legislation. The presence of the poor, locked into deprivation and oppression by the principalities and powers of the age - multinational corporations, technocracy, repressive governments, to begin the obvious list - stands as a reminder of the forces of darkness. The kingdom is thwarted by the poverty of some and by the stubbornness of others. Whatever contributes to the exaltation of the poor and the overthrow of unjust systems is a sign of the end of the world.

For some Christians today resistance to unjust structures, the principalities and powers is a sufficient motivating principle for Christian action.

Let me, on the strength of this perspective, offer four conclusions :

1. Our own elementary need is to recover the preaching and the inner dynamism of the New Testament Church. Our basic problem is our faithlessness. One only has to look at the paltry resources applied to serious study and other training of the laity to realise how much we trivialize the calling to Christian service in the world.

2. Closely related is our failure to engage the laity, who are the Church in the midst of the structures of society, in theological dialogue and strategy development about the issues they confront on the job, in politics and in community life.
3. We must look at budget priorities in our churches at every level, to ensure that we have the means - the human and program resources - to staff a serious effort ministry. It is unrealistic to imagine that churches, at the judicatory or national level, can accomplish any significant social action without staff. Granted, we cannot return to the highly centralized national bureaucracies and staffs of the past. Neither can we be anything but the rankest of amateurs in our social ministries without competent leadership.
4. Solidarity with the poor must become the organizing principle around which disciplined social witness takes place.

The issues today are multi-faceted and varied - not merely hunger but unemployment, underemployment, bad housing, malnutrition, inadequate clothing and shelter, disease, oppression and deprivation of opportunities, discrimination and suppression of fundamental rights, ecological devastation and waste and so forth. The issue is not charity; at most, dollars remain but a limited token of our concern. We need not only the will for responsible care for the creation but more - responsible action as expressive of our concern and care for the creation. Merely responsible care is not enough. Our care and concern must move us to responsible action for the welfare of the whole of God's total creation. In the final analysis, the question remains the re-ordering of our inner life. Are we prepared to undertake the rigorous examination of parish, family and personal life styles called for in a world of scarcity and as a Christian community, to make serious effort to understand and confront the systems which perpetuate the problem of separation between the rich and the poor? In short, are we willing and prepared to live in community with Christ to give witness to our responsible care and take responsible action for the creation?

IN CHRIST - TOGETHER IN MISSION

Lecture delivered by Dr. Carl J. Hellberg, Director, Department of Church Cooperation, Lutheran World Federation, at the Caribbean Regional Lutheran Consultation in Paramaribo (Surinam), on January 4, 1977.

Those preparing for this consultation have given me the task to write a paper on Seminar Nr. 1 of the LWF Assembly this year : IN CHRIST - TOGETHER IN MISSION. As I prepared myself for this, I went to the study book, or study guide for the Assembly. It is quite obvious that this study guide contains a lot of valuable material to be pondered and discussed by the delegates and the congregations prior to the Assembly. But there is no use in repeating what is said there. In my paper, I will therefore take another approach. In order to understand the mission task of the Church in our world today, it is necessary first to have a look at the recent history of the so called modern missionary movement and then, from there, analyze some of the impulses of world wide nature that now decide the concern for mission as a universal obligation for each church. The historical summary will, by necessity, contain some rather critical remarks. It must however be understood that the modern mission movement from the time of the revival movement in the end of the last century in the West had its roots in an optimistic faith in what was considered the western Christian civilisation being a tool for the spread of the Christian faith.

When it comes to the more analytical part of the paper, it must be stated how extremely difficult it is to hold a balanced view of the missionary nature of the Church today. Many of the methods used by the Church universal are criticised both from within the own ranks of the Church as well as from outsiders. But in as far as such criticisms serve to help us to reconsider our methods, policies and approaches, it is certainly to be both welcomed and encouraged.

The task of Mission belongs to the first essentials throughout the life of the Christian church. In other words, it is nothing new. It has a very interesting and sometimes very complicated history behind it. It is just because of this that we need to take history honestly and study it with the intention to avoid mistakes done in the past or to be freed of past compromises. Unless we are honest in our own self-evaluation of the past, we will certainly loose our own credibility and maybe also our own conviction in carrying out the task of mission.

It is interesting to note that the uncertainty about the task of the church in mission is mostly found in the Western world. It is no doubt that it, in itself, reflects a certain loss of self-confidence, that has become a burden to the people of that part of the world after two world wars. In Edimburg, 1910, the big starting point for the modern ecumenical movement as well as for modern mission, the optimistic slogan was : "Evangelisation of the World in this generation". The slogan heard now, in 1977, not just in the new

churches in Africa, Asia and to some extent also in this continent, but also in the mission departments of the big sending churches is : "Missionary go home". This points to an impression that I have got being involved in the mission work since 1954, namely that there is a certain paralysis of thought, characterising many of us engaged in finding new ways and means for mission : there is too little of creative new departures. It is necessary to analyze the reasons for this paralysis in order to be able to face the future open-minded and with a new optimism.

We must first admit that western domination and with that, what I would like to call western egocentrism, has a long time characterized the modern missionary movement until it has almost become intolerable. It may be good to remind ourselves of the statement made by the outstanding Indian Christian leader, Bishop V.S. Azaraiah, in Edimburg, 1910, in front of all the gathered leaders of the western mission movement : "Through all the ages to come, the Indian church will raise up in gratitude to attest to the heroism and self-denying labours of the missionary body. You have given your goods to feed the poor. You have given your body to be burnt. We also ask for love. Give us friends."

This was certainly something of a prophetic plea at a crucial point in the history of modern mission. The tragedy is that this plea was not always taken seriously. Edimburgh 1910 was a watershed in the history of mission. And still it became but one expression of the continuation of the optimistic faith in the western Christian civilisation and its possibilities to serve the missionary cause of the Church.

This was expressed in many different ways. Let us just take the cultural attitudes of the western missionaries. They saw it as part of their mission obligation and obedience to the Christian cause to impart western cultures and standards as a part of the Christian message. The heart of the problem was that they did not take the concept of the Church universal seriously enough. In proclaiming the Gospel, they did not bring forth the universal perspectives of Christ. They rather tried to substitute the culture of the country that received the Christian message with their own western culture or civilisation. The Church, in Europe, had mistaken its own feeling of being at home in a particular world view and in a particular culture for faithfulness to Christ. They thus were proceeding to call converts to a compromised Gospel - compromised by western cultural domination. The Christian mission became the monopoly of the western world = Christian western civilisation. In this attitude was contained also a certain assumption of racial and cultural superiority.

Maybe this was quite obvious and necessary at that time. The mission took place in a world dominated by western political and economical powers. This further implied a certain protection, a certain status to the western missionaries. It may be interesting to speculate about the differences there might have been in the way mission worked, if the development had come during a time when the Western countries were not politically dominant or were politically or economically weak ! Thus the spread of Christianity in Africa, Asia and Latin America went hand in hand with political and economic western expansion. In the 19th Century, the peak of European powers

starting to conquer new territories came to full flow, the old principle cujus regio, eius religio was applied to the various western colonial spheres of interest. The blend of Christianity of the colonising power became the prevalent mission in any area.

This period lasted until the rise of nationalism in the dominated continents. The colonised people fought for political freedom. At the same time, the mission became concerned with establishing so-called indigenous churches and started to encourage a development in that direction. What seemed justified and appropriate politically for that time was also thought to be wise from the point of view of the Church. The new churches should be self-reliant, the missionaries had to hand over the tasks to "the natives", the missionary was not to become the missionary anymore but specialised worker and traditional missionaries had to go home.

It is of course always dangerous to generalize or oversimplify any specific historical development. We have made this point here, however, in order to emphasize how we, human beings, are always the creatures of the time in which we live.

At this point, it is necessary to make an observation of the mission understanding of the nature of the Church, as it developed on the so-called mission fields. The mission had to be all embracing. It should, by necessity, include the whole society in which the Gospel was proclaimed. This led to difficulties in carrying out the work, in spite of missionary efforts, where there was the conversion of only a small minority in any given society. This method was particularly prevailing in missions deriving from folk church situations, either in Germany or in Scandinavia. In many of the so-called Anglo-Saxon missions, the method was rather to try to convert from the top. By converting the leaders in a society, the chiefs or whatever it was, it was hoped that the whole society eventually would become Christian.

Paired with these methods, was also the emphasis on individual conversions sometimes at the expense of the relationship of the individuals to the society into which they originally were born. This certainly gave cause to great tensions in these societies as Christians started to live their own life in Christian ghettos around the mission stations, because strangers, foreigners in their own societies.

One could thus enumerate quite a number of methods and principles in the mission work. As an overall impression, it suffices to say that mission did not bring to the floor a clear articulation of the nature and mission of the Church in any given society. Mission became not so much the planting of the Christian message in a new soil as the transfer of the Christian flower pot from one part of the world to another. As list of examples - which reveals only the top of the ice mountain - we can mention western pattern of liturgy, western translations of hymns, western style of ministries, western theological thoughts and western ways of proclaiming the Gospel, all transferred to societies having nothing to do with the western culture or western theology. The Christian church became something estranged from the receiving cultures and the Christian communities so often became Christian ghettos.

The miracle was that in spite of all weakness and all failures, the Church - that is the Christian communities - nevertheless was planted in almost all the various corners of the world. We must also admit that innumerable numbers of Christians in countries subject to the mission movement were tested in the fire of political and nationalistic upheavals and gained spiritual maturity and independence in the process. This tells us that the Lord of History is directing the events in any period of History.

The presence of the Church almost in any corner of the world of today then also becomes the starting point when we now try to see what it means to be "Together in Mission in the New Community in Christ." Any attempt to look at the mission task of our world today must first take into account this fact of the presence of the Church in the world. It is necessary to remind ourselves that there exist not just fragmented small national or confessional churches but that we have the right to speak of the worldwide Church - the Church universal. Therefore we have also the right to speak of the Mission universal. This then further implies that this Mission universal is a task challenging all of us, bringing us together in the New Community in Christ. The biblical foundation of the universal mission obligation cannot be disputed.

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In our time, we are, to a great extent, ruled by slogans. This is also true about our missionary obligation. We unite around slogans like "Partnership in mission", "Together in mission", "Joint action for mission" and "The mission of God". The question is to what extent we are serious in implementing the content of such slogans. Are we prepared to give our full support to mission initiatives of churches wherever they are in the world and without any ties or conditions? One example in the period between the two assemblies of the Lutheran World Federation is the letter of the Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus in Ethiopia, from 1972. The heading of the letter is "On the interrelation between the Proclamation of the Gospel and Human Development". This heading points to the fact that there are areas within the context of this new church in Africa where possibilities for evangelism and religious instruction are wide open. In spite of this fact, Lutheran churches not only in Ethiopia but also in other parts of the world must reluctantly curtail their own evangelistic programs and efforts and turn down invitations to proclaim the Gospel because of lack of funds and personnel. They are supposed to be self-reliant - and thereby could be doomed to paralyzing poverty.

Many opportunities for Church growth have in that way been forever forfeited. What is self-reliance, if not reliance on Christ, for sharing?

On the other hand, it seems to be almost unlimited resources at the disposal of all churches in so-called developing countries to get help for development aid. Where is the balance between human development and the proclamation of

the Gospel ? Is not the goal the liberating of the whole human being through proclamation as well as through development aid ? This calls for the need to break away from certain established patterns and certain mission policies or principles inherited from the past with self-reliance as conditioned goal and instead be more ready for new initiatives in fellowship as one Christian community in the world. We must fulfill the missionary task of the Church in discerning the time as it is. This involves a new discovery of new dimensions in mission. The financial support of the mission task of any given church is too often tied to missionary personnel and consequently also to quite an extensive work on the home basis in order to make it possible to raise the necessary funds to send out missionary staff. Where is the willingness to share resources irrespective of geographical discussions ? Should we not share our resources without any conditions trusting that missionary methods and approaches done by each individual church in its own evangelistic outreach will prove to be the best in each instance ? Is it not the time to take seriously the so-called two-way traffic in mission, recognizing that we all have something to learn from each other as well as something to give to each other, not necessarily counted in dollars ? What we suggest here is a new perspective of the Church in its mission. We cannot think in terms of mission anymore as just a one-way traffic. Those who have grown accustomed to control initiatives and resources must now start to visualize and put in practice new ways of conducting themselves being true partners. Otherwise they are not faithful when they talk about the overall brotherhood of all Christians and the Lordship of Christ, Christ being the Lord of Mission. The assembly in Dar-Es-Salaam must take seriously the obligation to be thus together in mission as we are together in Christ in a new community.

It has been very interesting to follow closely the concern for mission as seen in the years since the last General Assembly of the LWF in 1970. Step by step, we have observed how churches in Africa, Asia and Latin America more and more take on their own the mission obligation to spread the Gospel to their own societies. More recently, this has developed into a new responsibility in these churches when it comes to assisting churches in the western world in their missionary tasks.

When I, the other week, attended the All Asia Lutheran Conference in Singapore, I listened with joy to the statements made by our brethren in that part of the world about them going to other countries, other continents, proclaiming the Gospel. I felt that they had something to give that is lacking in the churches in other parts of the world. There is a minority situation in a predominantly non Christian world. But is this not true about any church in any part of the world of today ? In so-called Christian countries, do not churches act as if the tasks were fulfilled and as if the whole society had been permeated with Christian principles ? In that situation comes the appeal from the churches in Asia to their brother and sister churches in other parts of the world. "You need us to see that the task is far from fulfilled. We have something to contribute in order to help you to see your own mission obligation". Is not the same true about you, in Latin America, as well as about any given church in any part of the world ? Must we not sit down and have a close look not just at our own situation in our own society, but also always go beyond our own boundaries and see what we have to contribute to the mission task of the church universal ?

"Together in Mission" means faithfulness in proclaiming the message. If that faithfulness is there with the fire of strength to go beyond our own boundaries, there is a true understanding of the universality of the task of the church in mission. The word of salvation given to us and which we are obliged to proclaim does not divide the world according to human patterns. It speaks to man as he is created by God. It further speaks to man about Christ whose Cross is not planted in a particular cultural context but is raised in the middle of our world. The message of salvation in Him is a call to repentance. This call for repentance is not directed to others, but directed to us in our particular service.

Earlier we made a reference to the statements from Edinburgh 1910, with its appeal for "the evangelisation of the world in this generation". This was in my opinion an expression of an almost unchristian optimism, paired with the faith in a particular cultural pattern, stamped as being the only Christian way of life. When we think of the future of mission, the eschatological dimension must come to the fore once more. We do not necessarily work for great results in our time. Our tendency to make statistical evaluations is, in a Christian sense, false. When this prevails, it still represents a human effort to count the results which has its roots in one egoistic wish to glorify ourselves. Passed is the self-confidence and unrealistic optimism that grew out of the predominance of the western powers. When the message in the past was carried to the peoples of Africa, Asia and Latin America, it was largely stripped of its eschatological dimension as it was related so closely to a process of aculturation to the western part of the world to be statistically registered. The tragedy was that people who were reached with this kind of message desperately had a longing for a same message and a new hope. Instead, they found a discrepancy between the Christ they met in the word and the Christ as he was proclaimed by the western missionaries being at the same time the founder of a so-called western Christian civilisation. Their longing for a new Christian hope within their own cultural and sociological contexts was therefore met with a flat and uncomprehending "no" from the western missionaries. All this now must belong to the past. We need the eschatological dimension that also brings in our work a new optimism and a new faith. We do not work for success in our time and in our world. We stand here as participants in God's own time - we are in the middle of a process, the goal of which is already achieved in the act of reconciliation, once made at Calvary. When it is to be fully revealed, lays not in our power to decide. It is in the Second Coming.

In Christ, A new community - In Christ, Together in mission

In the end everything depends on our faithfulness to the word proclaimed, in our willingness to listen and to learn. If we ever are going to overcome the stage where we just make proclamations and prepare slogans and instead start to march unto action, we must be willing not to just emphasize our own particular methods, structures or interests, but to learn from each other. The future of the mission lays - to put it in very general way - with the acceptance of the fact that we are living in a shrinking world, where the situation for the Church irrespective of its geographical as well as of its cultural background, is the one of a minority church given the task of courageously proclaiming its faithfulness to the Lord of the Church. This calls for a team spirit, for a sense of brotherhood, for a willingness to obedience and for a readiness to adaptation. This might seem

to be a rather uncertain future as we look for our "togetherness in mission". On the other hand, it becomes a challenge to us to take our belonging to the Church universal seriously by serving the universality of the mission together.

IN CHRIST - RESPONSIBLE CARE FOR CREATION

Lecture delivered by Mr. Edward Bouwer, layman of Moravian Church in Surinam, on January 5, 1977.

Brethren and Sisters in Christ,

Allow me to introduce myself to you. My name is Bouwer. B O U W E R Edward. My occupation is business. And I am a member of the Moravian Church. I also have the privilege to be active within the Moravian Church.

Please also accept my apologies for not being able to be with you earlier or during these meetings in person, because I have been with you in the spirit.

Now that we have cleared all this, let us proceed to our topic for this morning, which is : IN CHRIST - RESPONSIBLE CARE FOR CREATION.

So, we will not be speaking about the responsible care every creature has for God's creation only, but more specifically about the responsibility we have as Christians. Because being in Christ gives added responsibility and care. And let me hurry to state that being in Christ gives everlasting life and peace.

It is important to make this statement here. Because Billy Graham tells us in his book "Peace with God" that many have refused to go and live as a Christian, because much more negative than positive aspects of Christian life were placed before them. They claim that leading a Christian life is contrary to everything enjoyable and profitable. This is not true ! Following Christ does not mean that we must say goodbye to all proper interests and ambitions. The Bible teaches that we must do our daily work and that we must take pride in doing it well. We have all place on earth and all have a task. They who call themselves Christians not only have the obligation to work, but also to do it to the best of their abilities. The Holy Bible is in praise of Bezaleel, who worked up gold, silver, copper, stones and wood. Jacob and his sons were shepherds. Daniel was a statesman, Josef a carpenter and also some of the disciples of Jesus were fishermen. But 'Noblesse oblige'.

There has been much to do about the so-called "Social Gospel", but Jesus thought that we must hold our Christian life in one hand and a cup of cold water in the other. Christian must, more than any other, take at heart the social problems and social injustice. In Christ, we must be good citizens. The Bible teaches that Christians must respect the law. The Bible also commends love of one's country.

Sex is one side of our lives which we, even if we wanted to, would not be able to destroy, because this would mean the end of all life. Making a good use of it can bring us much joy. Using it wrongly, the hell can break loose. Using it wrongly, it will tyrannize over you. Christians know not where to hide for shame when their fellow-man use sex so foolish, so abusive, so immoral, that they blemish and violate the deed by which we have all received life from God. It stands to reason that those who hold a Christian option about sexual life, also look upon marriage from a Christian point of view.

In Christ, we must respect all honest labour and the Christian must be the most trusty, the most willing and the most able of all. Very important is that the Christian has obligations toward his fellow-Christian. Our fellow-Christians form a special group for us. In this respect, the Bible teaches us that our mutual obligation, as Christians, is that we must be an example for each other. In his letter to the Ephesians, Chapter 4, vers. 32, the apostle Paul writes : "And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven us." These are only a few examples we could give for the social obligations of the Christians. Obligations in Christ. His Noblesse obliges him thus. This gives an idea what it means to be in Christ.

Now let us look at the creation for which responsible care must be taken. Let us first underscore the fact that the creation is God's. About this, we read in the opening verses of the Gospel, according to John : "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made". I find that the apostle makes it unmistakably clear to all who the Creator is, when he states : "All things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made. We Christians believe the Holy Bible to contain God's words. Therefore, these words taken from the New Testament of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, must prove to us without the shadow of a doubt that God made anything that was made. It is his Creation. The crown of his creation is Man. But Man failed God. And God had to take measures against man. But God has always loved Man in a way we cannot comprehend. And he promised that he would not always be quarrelling with man. He promised us that he would help us. To fulfill this promise to us, he sent us his only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, who is our Lord and Saviour, our Redeemer.

And it is to this son of his, that he gave all power in heaven and earth. In the Gospel according to Matthew, we read in Chapter 28, the verses 17 and 18 : "And when they saw him, they worshipped him, but some doubted. And Jesus came and spoke to them saying : All power is given to me in heaven and in earth." He therefore is not responsible to anybody and has obligations to no one. The same cannot be said of creatures who have some power. They owe this to God and therefore their power reaches as far as God allows.

The fact has already been established that Christ is our Redeemer and that he makes us free from the power of sin. For this, we must give him thanks and praise, serve him and be humble to him. Only when we do so do we become his followers, Christians, and members of his church, of which he is the head.

At this point, we have spoken about the facts that God created heaven and earth. That he also created Man, the crown of his creation. But Man sinned against God. And to save Man, he sent his son Jesus Christ, in his great Love to redeem Man. So Christ became our Redeemer, our saviour. God has given all power in heaven and earth to Jesus. And there is only one way to come to the Father, that is through the Son. Those who accept Jesus as their Saviour and Redeemer, and live by his words and teachings, are Christians. And therefore Christians have in Christ, responsible care for creation. His creation.

One of the subsequent responsibilities is our responsibility of Peace.

IN CHRIST : ONE COMMUNITY IN THE HOLY SPIRIT

Lecture delivered by the Rev. Geoffrey Tannassee, Lutheran Church in Guyana and Lutheran Tutor, UTCWI, Kingston, Jamaica, on January 4, 1977.

The tragic Cubana air disaster of October 6, last year, just off the coast of Barbados, dramatically illustrates the unity which is inherent in the Caribbean, if not in the whole human situation, '...mankind itself', says Bonhoeffer, 'must be regarded as a community'. The aircraft was built in Canada (or at least loaned or sold to Cuba by Canada), its passengers included Guyanese (11), Cubans (57) and North Koreans (5), bound for Jamaica and Cuba. The disaster occurred just off the coast of Barbados and the suspected perpetrators of the crime, once Cuban citizens now naturalized Venezuelans, were apprehended in Trinidad. North America, Asia, the islands of the Caribbean, South America - just about the whole world - were immediately telescoped into a global village and the legal arguments and complications which ensued among the various countries which were directly or indirectly involved (The Premier of St. Kitts and Nevis calling for the suspects to be shot on the spot) underlined the unity and inter-related nature of the Caribbean and neighbouring regions. Yet, if this region exhibits unity and the structures of a dependency and inter-dependency relationship, it is also a mirror of disunity and divisive forces. Some years ago, Anguilla severed its relationship with the sister islands of St. Kitts and Nevis and went on its own. Tobago, we read recently, is threatening to be an island (country) unto itself. The LDCs complain that they are not getting a fair deal from CARICOM. Rastafarians in Jamaica (people born and bred in Jamaica) consider themselves aliens and exiles in Babylon, longing for Ethiopia, the free and promised land and little, if anything, needs to be said about the racial tension in Guyana and to a lesser extent Trinidad, to say nothing of the gross and embarrassing, perhaps abysmal, ignorance which exists between the English-speaking islands and the non English speaking ones. What does the average Guyanese know of Guadeloupe and vice-versa ? Is Cuba part of the Caribbean ? What is Latin America and where is Curaçao ? Are typical questions which reflect our mental and geographical fragmentation ! And if language, space, and history account for our ignorance, what accounts for the break up of the short-lived Federation of British West Indies. How long will the UWI as a regional institution last ? There is now a medical faculty in Trinidad. How long will there be a West Indian cricket team ? What is said here of the Caribbean can be considered paradigmatic for the rest of the world (The Middle East and Far East, Africa and latterly United Kingdom itself, with Scotland and Wales agitating vigorously for greater self-government). It is against this background and within the context of tension between unity and divisiveness that I would like to examine the subject : IN CHRIST : ONE COMMUNITY IN THE HOLY SPIRIT.

I would first of all interpret the subject as set out in this rubric as the shorthand for the full title : Christ has established and continues to establish new and unique communities which are sustained by the Holy Spirit. If this is an accurate interpretation of the short subject, then there is already the presupposition that there are other communities. And if there are other communities, it is instructive that we look briefly and critically at community as a sociological and natural phenomenon of man.

Whatever else homo sapiens is, he is certainly a social animal endowed with the natural inclination and capacity to seek and establish community. He does even more. Once the community is founded, he attempts to uphold and further community living and to preserve the community by legislation and discipline. But this lofty idea of community derives essentially from a selfish motive. That is to say that for the I to realize itself there must be another self and not 'just another' but another that is sympathetic and receptive to the I. Thus the axiom, 'like attracts like'. This natural attraction of like for like ipso facto means negation and repulsion of unlike for unlike. Consequently, any human community by its very nature, even those which have come into being by the loftiest of motive and altruistic aims, tends to be partisan, selfish and egotistic. Another feature of such communities is that they tend to be short-lived and in many cases to end in disaster. The noblest aims and ideals which inspire the founding of communities and their brilliant but fleeting achievements which give them a false sense of permanence, history has shown time and again, sooner or later collapses, leaving its founders and architects bitter and disillusioned. From the Tower of Babel to the multiplicity of utopic blue-prints of our day, the story is one of sustained tragedy. The sociologist's (or politician's) explanation or analysis of failure of communities usually ends up by blaming the structures, the enemy and the de-stabilisers from outside, it is never man himself. The Christian's interpretation of the failure of community is exactly the opposite; the cause of failure, the Christian Faith holds, is man himself. Natural man - the Bible teaches and the Reformation thus emphasizes - is a fallen and crippled creature who cannot of himself and by himself found and sustain a permanent community, let alone one of reconciliation and peace. Man, estranged from himself, cannot be at once with his fellowmen and God. Man is in sin and sin, thanks to Paul Tillich, is separation :

"Separation is an aspect of the experience of everyone. Perhaps the word 'sin' has the same root as the word 'asunder'. In any case, sin is separation. To be in the state of sin is to be in the state of separation. And separation is threefold : there is separation among individual lives, separation of a man from himself, and separation of all men from the ground of Being."

Bonhoeffer's idea of sin is exactly the same. "Man, when he recognizes his guilt, feels his solitude before God; he begins to perceive the state in which objectively he has long been living, his state of isolation." (The Communion of Saints, p. 109).

If, therefore, human communities originate through selfish motives and perish because of sin, then the only way to ensure a permanent and universal community, that is - one that is open to all men, the like and the unlike - is to destroy what inflicts illness and death on communities, namely sin. - This is precisely what Christ accomplished for man. The Cross shatters separation of man from God and man from man and establishes a new community - The Church (Col. 3:11 : 'Here there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, but Christ is all, and in all.' The New Testament witness, therefore, is that through the death and resurrection of Christ, a new man, with a new community, comes into being and through the gift and power of the Holy Spirit that community is sustained in time and given an eschatological dimension. This eschatological dimension is extremely important. One community is already established in Christ. It is there - its structure, goals, etc., but its fullness is a thing of the future, simul justus et peccator is applicable here. As mankind became one community because of sin (I, Cor. 15:22, cf. Bonhoeffer's notion of mankind as one community because of guilt), so in Christ man becomes a new community and while Pentecost is that event which properly actualizes the new and reconciled community, in the incarnation, death and resurrection of Christ, all of mankind is already the potentially new and reconciled community. It means then that we have to take Karl Rahner's notion of the anonymity of Christ seriously as we seek to relate and proclaim the Gospel in pluralistic societies.

To recognize a difference between the one community made real in and by Christ and the one community actualized and energized by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, is to raise the theological question of the relationship between Christ and the Holy Spirit, but since this is not within the scope of this paper, we may merely note the relationship. During his earthly ministry and the post-resurrection period, Christ is the embodiment of the Spirit, it is only after the Ascension and at Pentecost that the gathered church experienced the outpouring of the Spirit. In other words, the Holy Spirit takes the place of the bodily presence of the Lord Christ. (See the farewell discourses in John 13 and ff. John 16:7 : 'If I do not go the Advocate will not come, whereas if I go, I will send him to you'). Whatever discrepancies exist between the Johannine account of the gift of the Holy Spirit (according to John 20, 22, the risen Christ breathes the Holy Spirit upon his disciples on the evening of Easter) and the Lukan account (Lk. 24:49, Acts 1:9 and 2), one thing is clear, for sure. Both accounts clearly indicate that the Spirit comes at the end of our Lord's earthly ministry. Thus whatever might be the weakness of the Modalist view (weakness is to say that the Spirit supersedes the Incarnation) the notion of God, Christ and the Holy Spirit as three modes of the one personal subject is basically useful, if not sound by Orthodox standards.

So at Pentecost, the Church, as one community, is actualised by the Holy Spirit - the embodiment of Christ and as the community begins to make manifest its life in the Spirit, several marks are at once apparent. We mention a few :

i) The distinctive and essential feature of the Church, that community of the Spirit as Dr. Luke describes it in Acts 2:42-27, Acts 4: 32-35 was in its Koinonia, a fellowship which embraced, unlike other communities, likes and unlikes, and which miraculously and dramatically transcended formidable and long established barriers. It was a community of reconciliation and the most dramatic illustration of it was the bringing together of Jews and Gentiles. When one considers the great gulf that was hitherto placed between these two groups, their reconciliation was a wonderful testimony of the miraculous work and power of the Holy Spirit. Once a Samaritan could have said - What have Jews to do with Samaritans ! Now people could say - See how the Christians love each other ! The experience and celebration of Koinonia was not a result of any plans or programmes of the Church. It was a result of grace, a gift of the Holy Spirit. The glory of the Church as a community in the Holy Spirit vis-à-vis partisan communities is strikingly illustrated in Peter's ambivalent attitude. In Acts 15:7-11, Peter is obedient to the guidance of the Holy Spirit in the matter of who should be part of the new community of Christ but later, when confronted with the solidarity of the Spirit in Gal. 2:11-4, he weakened to the point of seeing the Church as a community in human almost diabolic terms. As George Hendry puts it, Peter, on this occasion, ended with the flesh. The point I want to emphasize here is that the prophetic and propelling force for community was the work of the Holy Spirit and therefore something entirely outside of man. This is not to say that man (the members of that community) were entirely passive but the initiative and power were of God in the Holy Spirit. The proper question therefore for a gathering is not what we should do to bring Lutherans together, but how we can better experience God's gift - the grace of community !

ii) Worship

The community once established was nurtured through THE WORD, the breaking of bread and prayers. If outwardly the Church even at this point resembled any other institution community, its interior life and relationship orientation were different. Life in the Church was a happy union of the vertical and horizontal relationship. Significantly, the Augsburg Confessions and other symbols of the Lutheran tradition give pride of place to word and sacraments as the constitutive marks of the Church. Yet in actual practice 'the living Word', which Luther was never tired of stressing, has come to be regarded as intellectual and doctrinaire statements of the faith and the sacrament of the Holy Eucharist has been relegated to a secondary, if not negligible place in worship. Thanks toooo Lutheran liturgical renewal today, the centrality of the Eucharist in worship was rediscovered. It is encouraging to note that more and more the Holy Eucharist is celebrated with great frequency among Lutherans. The life of the community in the Spirit is sustained by grace (Christ's presence and power in the Holy Spirit) and if we believe, confess and teach that Christ comes to us in the word and offers himself in the sacrament of the Eucharist, what accounts for the secondary importance we attach to the Eucharist ?

iii) Relationship between the Church and the world

Acts 2:47 describes the one community in the Holy Spirit as enjoying 'the favour of the whole people'. The Church has either lost touch with the world or in some instances surrendered to the world. The Church ought to live in a state of creative tension; faithful and obedient to the call to mission and ministry but at the same time mindful that obedience must be expressed in the servant role of the Church ('I am among you as one who serves'). It is not an unfair criticism to say that in many instances the churches are concerned for the preservation of their own life and structures :

The churches are constantly tempted to seek their own life, to try to justify themselves and to secure their own influence and existence. When they succumb to this temptation, their witness becomes untrustworthy and their service is half-hearted and offered from a comfortable distance. One of the challenges for the churches today is to help each to live together as the new community prepared to face suffering and death in hope. (Study document : In Christ - A community in the Holy Spirit).

Luther's doctrine of 'The two kingdoms' which is often interpreted as a dogmatic statement of the separation between Church and State is on the contrary an effort to show the relationship which exists between the Church and the world. Likewise, the priesthood of all believers in emphasizing the call to be Christians simultaneously points to the servant role of the Church and its individual members.

If we accept the New Testament witness that the first Christian community was a united community in the Holy Spirit - authentic and effective - in its witness, mission and service with the Holy Spirit as the Lord and Giver of Life and if the Church, throughout its long and chequered troubled tragic history did break down barriers, did build up communities of reconciliation among all peoples and did engage in a variety of service to the world, it is imperative for us to ask what has gone wrong with the Church today ? Why are we no longer a visible, viable, active and effective community in the Spirit ? Or are we ? Do we still enjoy the respect of all the people and are we still able to penetrate into individual and collective lives ? Are we still that one community in the Holy Spirit with power and purpose to change and shape the world ? Is the word - Immanuel or Ichabod ?

Hope and humility must mark our attitude as we sit down to pray and study, and plan, and if we are really cut to the heart and are in earnest as one community in the Holy Spirit, then some of the questions raised by our discussions (In Christ : One community in the Holy Spirit) must make us all Jacobs, wrestling with God, determined that we would not let go until we be strengthened and confirmed in God's will to undo the burden and let the oppressed go free and to ask as Lutherans not so much what we can do for each other but what together we can do for the freedom of the world.

We must consider that the document suggests inter alia:

1. The call to discipleship, suffering and crucifixion (and if you think and feel this is theological jargon, then make it an agonizing existential question and ask yourself what it means first to be a Christian and secondly as a pastor or whatever office you fill).
 2. What is the nature and state of worship among our people ? Milton's Lycidas is a cruel but perhaps justifiable blow at our pastors and leaders : The hungry sheep look up and are not fed. Jesus said : 'Feed my sheep not fleece them'. How do we understand the 'living word' ? What place do we give to the Holy Eucharist in our congregations ? What is the place of prayer, Bible study, doctrine, etc.?
 3. The problem of our inherited institutions and structures. How do we divest ourselves from the structures which imprison us and stifle the Gospel ? To be sure that the effectiveness of the Gospel does not and cannot depend on money and prototypes. We hear of barefoot doctors, what of barefoot pastors ?
 4. Dialogue among Christian groups; inter-faith conversations; the anonymous Christ.
 5. The Church - A gathered and scattered community.
The Church - A servant to the World.
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IN CHRIST - A NEW COMMUNITY

Sermon at closing service of Holy Communion, delivered by Dr. Theodore Swanson, Chairman of Extension committee and O.T. lecturer, UTCWI, Kingston, Jamaica.

Last year, I was privileged to spend Pentecost in Jerusalem. It was a moving experience to celebrate the day in the city where the first Christian Pentecost occurred. When the festival began with Vespers on Saturday, our group of six was in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. First we heard the unfamiliar chants of the Syrian orthodox seminarian at the altar at Calvary; but then, in competition, came the sound of Gregorian chant from the Franciscan chapel. A strange mixture of sound, yet all singing the praise to God. On Sunday morning, we worshipped in the Church of the Redeemer, the Lutheran church of the Old city, just across the street from the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. The church was packed, as the three Lutheran congregations that use the church - the Arabic speaking, the English speaking and the German speaking congregations - worshipped together. We sang the hymns in whatever language we could manage. The OT lesson was read in Arabic - followed by a short sermon in Arabic, the NT lesson was read in English, followed by an English sermon; the Gospel was read in German, followed by a German sermon. We sensed the reality of that first day of Pentecost, when hearers from different lands marvelled, saying: "We hear them telling in our own tongues the mighty acts of God". We sensed that though we had come from many lands, we were one community created by the Spirit of God.

We now, after considering for three days the theme "In Christ - A new Community", are gathered for our closing act of worship. Although coming from many lands, from many different Lutheran histories and traditions, we celebrate our community in this service of Holy Communion. This is fitting, even as it is symbolic. For the movement, the tenses of the Lord's Supper, are in harmony with the movement, the tenses of the new community in Christ. Let me explain.

1. First, both the Lord's Supper and the new community in Christ are rooted in God's activity in the past, climaxed in God's action in Christ. In the sacrament, we are reminded of that past. We go to an upper room in Jerusalem and we hear these words: "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is shed for you and for many for the remission of sins."

What is going on here? We have to go back even farther into the past history of God's dealings with men to understand these words. We have to go back to those words of God spoken through Jeremiah the prophet which we heard read as our Old Testament lesson. For here, in the upper

room, is the inauguration of the new covenant of which Jeremiah spoke. The old covenant, the covenant made at Sinai, had been broken. Israel had been chosen by God to be a kingdom of priests and a holy nation - a nation set apart by God to be the mediators of the knowledge of God to the world, a light to the nations - but they had broken that covenant. They had pledged that Yahweh would be their husband, their lord by Ba'al - but they had gone after other ba'als, the gods of Canaan. But God was not about to give up. He looked forward to a new covenant with a new Israel, a new people of God, a new community, of whom he could say in truth : "I will be their God, and they shall be my people".

And in that upper room in Jerusalem, as we are reminded tonight, that a new community was constituted, a new Israel. The sacrifice whose blood was poured out, sealing that covenant was Jesus himself.

But notice the hallmark of that new community. It is a forgiven people. God says through the prophet : "I will forgive their iniquity and I will remember their sin no more". Our Lord says "This cup is the New Covenant in my blood, which is shed for you and for many, for the remission of sins". This new community in Christ, which God created, through Christ, at that point of time in the past, is a forgiven people.

I do not think that any of us who are pastors need to be reminded that the new community in Christ is a community of sinners. (...)

. The new community in Christ is not simply an answer to the problem of the sin that besets us on every side, it is a part of the problem. Let us not imagine ourselves in the church as knights in shining armour, ready to challenge and destroy those hosts of darkness and of wickedness besetting our world. Every time the church gets delusions about its own righteousness, it gets into trouble. When the knights of the Crusades finally conquered Jerusalem, they found to their surprise that all those strangely dressed, Eastern looking peoples that they had been happily massacring as infidels, turned out to be Eastern Christians. And what sensitive person, in our days, does not wince at what Protestants and Roman Catholics have been doing to each other in Northern Ireland, or what the so-called Christian forces in Lebanon were doing to Muslims? Or did we think we ought to cheer them on because they were the Christians? How often the Church has institutionalized privilege and has given its blessing to the inequalities of the status quo.

The Church is a community of sinners. But we would not have it otherwise. Not if we would be faithful to our Lord who declared : "I came to call not the righteous, but sinners to repentance". "Those who are sick have need of a physician, not those who are whole". The church is the community of those who come together, not as the basis of accomplishment, or of decency, or of the attainment of a standard of righteousness but the community of those who come simply, praying to be fulfilled,

the community of those who come praying, "Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner". Of course, that is so easy to say. It is theologically correct. We would not be Lutheran if we did not emphasize sin before grace, if we did not preach the law in order to bring people to the point where the Gospel can be heard. But I remember when this reality was brought home to me as a reality, not as a theological proposition. It was in church, but not at divine service, where we so ceremoniously and perfunctorily confess our sin. It was in the church hall of the congregation when I was serving my internship. An Alcoholics Anonymous group used the church hall and I attended its open meeting. I heard speaker after speaker get up and tell their experiences with alcohol, how they attempted to master the demon by themselves, by their own will power, and always failed, until they came to that point when they admitted that they were not the masters; alcohol had mastered them. They admitted they were powerless to help themselves and they sought the power of God, as they understood God, to lift them out of the depths. It made an impression on me : "God does have mercy on those who admit their powerlessness. The grace of God really works !". An amazing discovery - especially for one who aspired to be a proclaimer of the grace of God. That I really had something to say, not just to nice people, but to sinners, real sinners. But the church is a new community : and the newness of the community of sinners that is the church is the fact that they are forgiven sinners. In Luther's useful phrase, simul iustus et peccator - at the same time justified and sinners. Aware of their involvement in the sin of man, aware that they are as much a part of the problem as they are the cure, but yet forgiven. And forgiven themselves in making God's grace to others, just as my friends in AA got up and told the story of what God had done for them. How I have wished for more Christians who could and would tell their experience with God's grace as freely and as tellingly as those members of AA. The New testament is filled with the rhetoric of grace on the lips of those who encountered Jesus : "I was sick, but now I am well. I was blind, but now I see".

If the Church today does not know what it means to witness, in word as well as in deed, if it does not have a rhetoric of grace, if it does not evangelize, telling the good news, maybe it does not really know what it means to be forgiven sinners, maybe it does not know any good news to tell. The new community in Christ is rooted in the action of God in Christ. That action was to call sinners to repentance, that they might be forgiven. The new community is a community of forgiven sinners, a community which is not afraid to speak of what God has done for them.

2. Both the Lord's Supper and the New community in Christ are a present reality and have a present task. The movement of the sacrament is from the past to the present. In this Lord's Supper, even as we remember what God did in present reality for us today, (...) God comes to us in Christ : he is the present Christ, not only forgiving us, not only dealing with our past, but empowering us to incarnate his life today, in our world; to teach, to lead, to serve, to free in His name. The new community is not only a forgiven community : it is the community empowered by Christ's spirit to be the body of Christ among the broken and fragmented communities of our world.

We have spent a lot of time, the past three days, talking precisely about this. The question is, "How can we, members of the new community in Christ, be, as Luther put it, Little Christs to our neighbours, especially when what our neighbour needs is not what can be done by individual charity, because their dilemma is that they have caught up in institutions and structures and value systems that oppress them; institutions and structures and value systems that are our own, in which we acquiesce ? How can we free two thirds of the world from the trap of poverty, especially when we ourselves are equally captive to the trap of affluence ? A more comfortable trap perhaps, lined with wall-to-wall carpeting, but a trap nonetheless !

But you see, the big question is "how"? We do not disagree on what must be done. We agree that even as our Lord Christ did, we must seek for the hungry to be fed, the naked clothed, the homeless housed. But we also know that salvation is not simply having sufficient food and clothing and housing. The millions of well-fed North Americans and Europeans living joyless, meaningless lives, gives the lie to that. Too much bread is as dangerous as too little. Cardio-vascular disease brought about by overeating can be just as fatal as malnutrition. Man does not live by bread alone, but by every word which proceeds from the mouth of the Lord.

I do not think we disagree about this - that our ministry must be both a ministry of word and of deed. It is not a matter of either evangelization or humanization, of either proclamation or human development : it has to be both/and. Both evangelization and humanization; both proclamation and human development. Witness by word and witness by deed belong together.

Word without deed is meaningless chatter; deed without word is a travesty of our Christian commitment to witness. Pastor Solinger mentioned Albert Schweitzer in his meditation Monday morning. I remember vividly a scene from one of Schweitzer's books. He tells of a patient being carried to the jungle hospital by anxious friends and relatives, screaming from the pain of a strangulated hernia. The doctor operates, corrects the condition. But then he sits by the bedside of the man who, when he comes out of the anaesthesia, says : "There is no more pain". But then Schweitzer says the doctor tells the patient of the Lord Jesus, through whose love the doctor came so that he could operate and take away the pain. The deed and the word that interprets the need, go together. I do not think we disagree about this, we do not disagree about the what.

The problem with which we have been wrestling is the how. How does the church make its voice heard among the cacophony of sound in the world today ? What strategies does the church employ to simultaneously release men from the trap of poverty and the trap of affluence ? How does the church influence the policy of governments ? How does the church influence the superpowers to cease their absolute irresponsible madness in the misuse of the earth's resources ? How do we help people help themselves ? How do we stimulate development without creating dependency ? How ? That is the hard question. What is our strategy ? If we have given or

received help on that through this consultation, it will have been worthwhile.

This sacrament gives us the assurance that we can trust Christ's Spirit to give us guidance and to empower us as we address ourselves thoughtfully, prayerfully, to the question of the "how". The Christ who comes to us in the Sacrament in a way we can taste and see, will guide us through his Spirit in ways perhaps we do not yet know, but that guidance will be there. Meanwhile, let us do our homework even as we say our prayers for the guidance of that Spirit.

3. We do not stop, even with the grace that is a present reality, the grace that is sufficient for each day. For the movement of the Sacrament is from past to present to future. Our Lord told his disciples at that last supper : "I tell you, I shall not eat it again until it is fulfilled in the Kingdom of God". The Eucharist is the liturgical anticipation of the messianic banquet : it is a foretaste of the great supper in heaven when the Kingdom of God shall have come in its fullness, the day when, as proclaimed by Jeremiah, "no longer shall each man teach his neighbour and each kin brother, saying 'Know the Lord', for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the Lord..."; the day when every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. In this way, our communion meal reminds us that the new community in Christ lives in hope. It lives, drawing on the future, as it were, to sustain itself in the present. It lives as a sign of the future in the present.

We have been reminded of this in various ways these past three days together. James Masih-das sketched the NT perspective for us. We, in the church, live between the times, between the already of Christ's resurrection and the not yet of the consummation of the Kingdom; citizens of the new age that has dawned in Christ, but still caught in the struggles, the ambiguities, the evil powers of the old age that prevail until the Kingdom comes in its fulness. Our Lord came, announcing that the Kingdom of God was at hand. The kingdom is manifest among us. The King has come ! Christ has conquered the powers of sin and death. We can live in His grace and power ! But our Lord also taught us to pray : "Thy kingdom come". We still sin. We still do. We still see the power of the evil one at work amongst us, in our Lebanons, our Northern Irelands, our Zimbabwes, our Namibias - yes, in ourselves. We fervently pray "Thy kingdom come". But because we have seen the inbreaking of the kingdom in Christ, because we have seen his glory among us, we confidently pray "Thy kingdom come", we await with sure and certain hope the fullness of his glory.

This past Christmas, I was meditating on the concept of glory. I recalled that when I was a small boy, that which seemed glorious to me was a parade of soldiers, in dress uniform, marching to the accompaniment of a brass band. In a burst of patriotism, I thought how glorious it would be to be able to fight for my country. Well, I have suffered a change

of heart. I no longer think it glorious to die fighting to atone for the mistakes of diplomats. In time, I began to think of glory in terms of the first definition in the dictionary : distinction, recognition, fame, renown. Even that has lost its appeal. I think I have lived long enough to realize that I do not need that kind of glory ! It is recognition enough to have a wife and family that love and respect me in spite of my failures and stupidities, distinction enough that I am able to do the jobs I am given to do with a reasonable degree of competence. Glory is there when there breaks in upon us that which is true, that which is beautiful, that which reflects the reality of God himself. Sometimes I feel it in my reading, my study, when an author expresses truth in a way that seems transparently clear, that I can say : "That is precisely it" - that is glorious. I sometimes feel it when listening to music, when somehow I am lifted out of myself, my cares, my chaotic thoughts, into a realm of transcendent beauty - that is glorious. I experienced it a few days after Christmas, when I went hiking in the mountains of Jamaica with my family. We had to leave our car and hike up a mountain side for 3 miles. Finally, we came upon the mountain top to find a beautiful botanical garden, when the hand of man, instead of spoiling the landscape, as it usually does, had actually enhanced its God-given beauty - that was glorious.

That is the glory of Christmas : the eternal breaking through into time, the transcendent becoming immanent, the Word becoming flesh and dwelling among us, full of grace and truth. And we have beheld his glory !

To-morrow is Epiphany, the festival of the manifestation, the revelation of the light, the glory of Christ to the nations. Is this not our call, as members of the new community in Christ : to reflect his light, his glory, the glory of his coming kingdom, amidst all the darkness that is around us ? Is not this our task as the new Israel, the people of the new covenant, to be God's light to the nations ? To live, giving ourselves, not holding ourselves back, not seeking security for ourselves and for our institution, because we know there is no security in a world where death and decay claim all ; but to live, daring even to die, because we know that the risen King and His Kingdom await us. To live for Christ, knowing that whatever we do for him, no matter how partial it is, no matter how flawed, no matter how ambiguous - what we do is not in vain. To live, reflecting his glory as we discern it now, knowing that finally we shall behold the glory of God and his Christ face to face. To live the life of God's future today !

So we come to the table of the Lord tonight. It is a true communion - the community meal of the new community in Christ, expressing our unity together as Christians, and our fellowship with God through his Son. It speaks to our pasts, our presents, our futures. It recalls God's action in Christ who, while we were yet sinners, died for us. We, the new community in Christ, are forgiven sinners. In this sacrament, Christ comes to us in the present, this night, empowering us as Christ's new community to incarnate his life today. We pray the guidance of the Holy Spirit to show us how we might do that in our world today. And this sacrament also looks to our future with God, as we anticipate partaking of the great banquet in Heaven. It calls us to hope, to live the life of the coming Kingdom today, to reflect the glory of Christ here and now, knowing we shall see his glory face to face.

RESOLUTIONS OF THE SUB-REGIONAL CONSULTATION OF
ENGLISH/DUTCH-SPEAKING LUTHERANS IN THE CARIBBEAN,
HELD IN PARAMARIBO, SURINAM, FROM JANUARY 3 TO 5, 1977

- I. Whereas, there are communities of Lutherans in part of the Caribbean, areas which are not considered part of Latin America either geographically or culturally, and

Whereas, the Lutheran World Federation secretary for the region is designated only as Secretary for Latin America,

BE IT RESOLVED that the designation of the desk be changed to Secretary for South America and the Caribbean Region, SACARD.

- II. Whereas, our churches in this area have expressed a desire to minister to the total man and

Whereas, we lack knowledge as to approaches in prescribed areas of development (economics, sociology, technology, education etc.),

BE IT RESOLVED that we request help from the LWF in providing the expertise desirable to assess and initiate suitable projects related to our local churches. This is to say that whereas our region is scattered geographically, this technical expertise should be directly related to studies made within our countries preferably utilizing resources and personnel available in the Caribbean.

- III. Whereas, we have discovered that there are Lutheran communities scattered throughout the area, and

Whereas, we are convinced that consultation among the various churches can only be profitable,

BE IT RESOLVED that we seek LWF assistance to promote biennial consultations to promote cooperation to foment cooperation in multiple ministries to the world (Evangelism, social ministries, mass media, theological education etc.).

- IV. Whereas, the Lutheran Churches and communities in the Caribbean face rapid political changes as certain Caribbean nations turn to various forms of socialism,

BE IT RESOLVED that the LWF continue to make available to the Caribbean region on an ecumenical basis whatever expertise and resources member churches have that relate to the issues of socialism and the church in the Caribbean.

- V. Whereas, the human and legal rights of women in certain areas of the Caribbean are more frequently violated than in other areas of the Western world, and

Whereas, the issue of human rights in the Caribbean often overlooks the question of women's rights,

BE IT RESOLVED that the LWF continue to commit itself to sharing in the struggle of women by offering its resources and expertise to appropriate Lutheran and ecumenical groups in the Caribbean region.

B. Resolutions relating to local concerns:

I. Whereas, there will probably be surplus of funds from the budget of this consultation because of the inattendance of some members, and

Whereas, there will be a need for the steering committee of the Caribbean-Americas English-speaking Lutheran churches to meet during 1977 to prepare for the 1978 consultation,

BE IT RESOLVED that the LWF Geneva office be asked to designate that the excess funds be applied to the costs of the meeting of the steering committee.

II. Whereas, scheduling this conference the first week in January presents scheduling and flight problems for many members,

BE IT RESOLVED, that the next consultation and subsequent consultations be held after the 15th of January.

III. Whereas, the Lutheran Church in Surinam so graciously hosted this consultation,

BE IT RESOLVED that a deeply felt expression of gratitude be extended to this church.

IV. Whereas, the LWF and the mission agencies of the LCA, ALC and LC-MS provided funds to aid participants to attend this consultation,

BE IT RESOLVED that an appropriate expression of gratitude be forwarded to these bodies with the hope that they will continue to see the value in aiding various participants related to these groups to attend future Caribbean consultations.

REPORT ON THE SUB-REGIONAL CONSULTATION OF
ENGLISH/DUTCH-SPEAKING LUTHERANS IN THE CARIBBEAN

Time and Place: The Consultation was held from January 3 to 5, 1977 in Paramaribo, the capital of the independent Republic of Surinam. Most of the foreign participants attended, already on January 2, the worship service in the Martin Luther Church, where the Associate General Secretary of the LWF, the Rev. Albertus Maasdorp, preached.

Preparation: The Preparatory Committee was formed by two members of the Steering Committee elected at the Lutheran Sub-Regional Consultation held in 1975 in Georgetown (Rev. King from Surinam and President Seeram), the Rev. William Harman (Trinidad) and the Rev. George Pösfay (LWF-DCC). The Committee met in Surinam on November 8, 1976. All local preparations were made by the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Surinam, headed by the Rev. King.

Objectives of the Consultation:

- a) By discussing the themes and sub-themes of the LWF VI Assembly, to prepare the participants of the Dar-es-Salaam meeting coming from the region as well as all other interested people for this great forthcoming event of the Lutheran churches of the world,
- b) To offer the churches in the area a possibility to express their concerns, especially those which should be forwarded to the VI Assembly,
- c) To foster fellowship among the often isolated Lutheran groups in the Caribbean area and to give them an opportunity to discuss together future plans for cooperation.

Participants of the Consultation (according to countries and including lecturers):

Lutherans: Bahamas	1	Ecumenical Representatives from Surinam: 6
Guyana	4	
Jamaica	2	In addition to the mentioned participants,
Surinam	10	some members of Lutheran and other Christian
Trinidad	1	churches in Surinam, including the President
Venezuela	1	of the country, the Prime Minister, the
US Natl. Committee	1	President of the Parliament and the Foreign
LWF Geneva Staff	4	Minister attended certain parts of the
		program (services, lectures etc.)

Total of participants: 30

Financing: All participants from abroad were invited to pay US\$ 15 registration fee to the host church. No charges were made for housing, meals and transportation. Travel assistance from LWF-DCC funds was given to one delegate from Guyana and one from Venezuela. Others paid their own transportation expenses or received assistance from their respective churches, boards or institutions/organizations.

Evaluation: Beside the work which was accomplished during the consultation and is also reflected in the resolutions, it should be mentioned that this consultation was the first international Lutheran meeting held in Surinam, where the Lutheran church has had a continuous ministry since 1742, thus being the oldest Lutheran congregation in the South American sub-continent. Since in the past it had hardly any contacts with other Lutheran churches, except Guyana and the Netherlands, through this gathering its members were made more conscious of the fact that they belong to a family of churches which are stewards of a special heritage. The church already took preliminary steps to become a member of the LWF.

The absence of several Lutheran groups, which in 1975 had attended the first sub-regional gathering, held in Georgetown, was felt. Delegates from the Virgin Islands, from Mexico, Guatemala and Panama could not come for different reasons (cancellation of flights, financial and other difficulties), nor were the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Canada, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the Netherlands and the three major Lutheran churches in the USA able to send a representative, although they had been invited. Attempts were made to have a Cuban Lutheran at the consultation, but without result.

The originally planned meeting of the Steering Committee, elected in 1975 to coordinate future plans for sub-regional cooperation, could not be held because three of its five members were not present. In one of the resolutions of the Consultation the LWF is asked to assist the organization of such a meeting in 1977 to plan a major consultation for 1978.

Since the specialized services rendered by the LWF to Lutheran churches and others are not all known in the sub-regions, the Consultation presented a good opportunity to receive information about these services and - as some of the resolutions reflect - the churches expressed their wish to become more involved in some of the programs of the LWF.

George Pösfay